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Audioblogs: Key Tool to Lower Anxiety in Oral Fluency

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Research Report submitted

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Directed by Liliana Marcela CUESTA

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Chía, Colombia

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AUDIOBLOGS TO LOWER ANXIETY IN ORAL FLUENCY

Declaration

I hereby declare that my research report entitled:

[Audioblogs: Key Tool to Lower Anxiety in Spoken Performance]

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- has been submitted by or on the required submission date.

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Abstract

This mixed method action research study analyzed the influence of the use of audio blogs to lower anxiety and improve students' oral fluency. This study was conducted with three different groups, all the learners classified with an A1 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, as they are: six seventh graders from Ofelia Uribe de Acosta IED school, six tenth and eleventh graders from Luis Angel Arango IED school in Bogotá, Colombia and six young adults from SENA (Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje) in Villavicencio, META, Colombia. According to the needs analysis, the participants showed high levels of negative anxiety, affecting their desire to speak in the target language as well as lack of fluency by making constant pauses in their oral speech. Due to this fact, the data of this study was collected using a student's log, a survey, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale designed by Horwitz (1986) and the participants' artifacts: audioblogs. All the data collected through these instruments was analyzed following the grounded theory method. The results revealed that the use of audio blogs allowed the participants to lower the level of negative anxiety by increasing the level of positive anxiety; thus, not only the participants enjoyed the process of recording the audio blogs but also the repetition of the task helped them raise awareness of their learning process and the improvement of fluency, variables which enrich the existing research studies since any of them considered audio blogs as a significant tool to decrease anxiety whilst improving fluency. This study enriches second language learning research by providing insights on the influence of anxiety on fluency and the impact of audioblogs in the increasing of positive anxiety and the development of learning awareness.

Key words: Anxiety, audioblogs, CALL, fluency, speaking skill.

Resumen

El presente estudio acción investigación de método mixto analizó la influencia del uso de los audioblogs para disminuir la ansiedad y mejorar el nivel de fluidez de los estudiantes. Este estudio se llevó a cabo con tres grupos diferentes, todos los participantes clasificados en el nivel A1 de acuerdo al Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas; seis estudiantes de grado séptimo del colegio Ofelia Uribe de Acosta IED, seis estudiantes de grados décimo y undécimo del colegio Luis Angel Arango IED en Bogotá, Colombia y seis adultos jóvenes del centro de comercio y servicios, SENA en Villavicencio, Meta. De acuerdo al análisis de necesidades, los estudiantes evidenciaron altos niveles de ansiedad negativa al hablar en inglés, al igual que falta de fluidez en su discurso oral. Debido a este hecho, los datos de este estudio fueron recolectados a través de la bitácora del estudiante, una encuesta, la escala de ansiedad (FLCAS) diseñada por Horwitz (1986) y los audioblogs. Todos los datos recolectados a través de estos instrumentos fueron analizados de acuerdo al método de teoría fundamentada; los resultados revelaron que el uso de los audioblogs permitió a los participantes disminuir su nivel de ansiedad negativa incrementando el nivel de ansiedad positiva; así mismo, los participantes disfrutaron el proceso de grabación de los audioblogs y la repetición de las actividades les permitió ser conscientes de su proceso de aprendizaje y mejorar su fluidez, variables que enriquecen los estudios de investigación existentes, ya que ninguno de ellos consideró audioblogs como una herramienta significativa para disminuir la ansiedad mientras mejora la fluidez. Este estudio enriquece la investigación en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua dando perspectivas de la influencia de la ansiedad en la fluidez y el impacto de los audioblogs en el incremento de la ansiedad positiva y el desarrollo de la conciencia de su proceso de aprendizaje.

Palabras claves: ansiedad; audioblogs; CALL; habilidad del habla y fluidez.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the study

Learning a foreign language evolves cognitive and metacognitive skills and affective aspects. Foreign language learners face challenges and drawbacks which may hinder their learning process and affect their motivation to use the target language (Dörnyei, 2003). Regarding this, one of the most significant barriers learners face in performing effectively relies on the level of anxiety many of them experience while being exposed to communicating in a language other than their native one (Gregersen, 2005). Based on this and on the multiple studies which analyze how anxiety affects students' language learning process and performance, the researchers decided to pay special attention to the high levels of anxiety learners from three different educational settings experience.

Horwitz (2001) claims anxiety leads students to failure and decrease their performance level in the classroom. Thus, when learners feel anxious in the foreign language classroom they avoid using target language and fail to reach learning goals which ultimately hinders their oral development (Oxford, 2002). With these circumstances in mind, and acknowledging the social and educational responsibility while offering learners the best conditions to learn a new language, the researchers in the present study identified the patterns surrounding anxiety and determined it was vital to figure out a strategy aimed at reducing anxiety in language-learning environments with the purpose of encouraging learners to use the target language and both, actively and comfortably participate in academic and social communicative events.

Considering it is often asserted that speaking in a new and unfamiliar language is an intimidating experience for foreign language learners (Pleuger, 2001); it is vital to support students' language learning process with meaningful strategies not only for decreasing anxiety

level but also for promoting the development and strengthening of speaking skills (Horwitz, 2008).

This perspective suggests that language teachers look for effective ways to help learners lower anxiety by encouraging them to recognize their frustrations in language-learning situations and create interesting and reasonable language expectations.

On account of this and the constant and bigger educational challenges of societal and technological changes; it is imperative that the use of technology within academic environments especially in the foreign language process, allows to help develop language skills effectively by enabling students to tap outside experts, visualize and analyze data, link to real world contexts, and take advantage of opportunities for feedback, reflection and analysis (Bransford et al, 1999). Additionally, the use of such tools become into as Raya and Fernandez (2002) conclude “the practical means whereby learners can take a more active part in decisions involved in learning” (Raya & Fernández, 2002) which for the purpose of the present study is optimal due to students possibly gaining more confidence about their learning and this reliance can be reflected in their active participation in classroom communication.

Bearing that in mind, it is fundamental to examine how technological artifacts, specifically audioblogs may change learners’ expectations as regards the foreign language learning and the speaking experience by turning it into a more pleasurable and engaging one. Using audioblogs students would have the opportunity to communicate meaning and foster oral skills through voice recordings where they could assess themselves and their peers (Race, 2001) and reflect on their strengths and weaknesses as well as facilitating the possible strategies in overcoming their language difficulties.

1.2 Rationale of the study

This research project aims at demonstrating the possible impact of audioblogs lowering anxiety in oral fluency in oral fluency within a group of teens, teenagers and younger adults in three different Colombian environments. Researchers have observed factors which have a debilitating effect on learners' oral fluency which include some striking features such as: a continual lack of confidence from the learners when speaking in the foreign language, little motivation towards the learning of English and the anxiety which may discourage learners to use target language in potential communicative situations (Aida, 1994; Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Phillips, 1992) such as oral presentations, role plays, oral interviews and rehearsals in front of the teacher and their peers.

Concerning the relationship between anxiety and oral fluency in the target language, especially in the populations explored, anxiety may be a significant obstacle with reference to the development of fluency, required factor to the authentic accomplishment of the learners' speaking performance, which in Lennon (1990)'s words is defined as the physical representation of the mental process that occurs when speech planning and production are taking place. This definition is related to the learners' speaking performance of the current research study since it considers pauses, the temporal variable used to measure fluency (Riggenbach, 1991) and helps to illustrate the anxiety level in all the participants; an important factor to bear in mind as it suggests that fluent speech is that which presents fewer pauses and faster speech (Lennon, 2000; De Jong et al., 2015).

Added to that, the outcomes of the needs analysis of the present research study suggest that the major stressors identified by students when performing orally have to do with performing tasks in front of their peers and English teacher and students feeling afraid of making

mistakes and being mocked by classmates (Appendix B). Therefore, this is why it is imperative for language teachers to constantly seek new optimal alternatives to not only guarantee the learning of the target language but for the case of the present study, to lower anxiety while performing orally, it is also necessary to consider the inclusion of technological resources which can definitely foster the students' oral language ability and turn it into a more meaningful and personal rewarding spoken experience in both, in and outside the classroom.

After the research on a variety of technological tools to overcome anxiety, it was found that audioblogs were the best choice taking into account their potential as a tool with which learners have the opportunity of providing and receiving feedback from peers favors both the students' speaking skills and the anxiety management. As stated by Alastuey, (2011)

Audioblogs should be included in the English lessons because of different reasons: firstly, the use of audioblogs generate an impact on their communicative competence. Shamsudin and Nesi (2006) realized that learners who carried out computer mediated communication tasks saw significant improvements in their oral communication skills, which indicated better spoken performance. Secondly, audioblogs might help students to overcome negative affective factors such as anxiety and nervousness when using the target language and to develop awareness in the learning process, since learners can provide and receive feedback from peers and tutor.

1.2.1 Needs analysis and problem statement

The present research project was conducted in three different groups; with students from Ofelia Uribe de Acosta School and Luis Angel Arango in Bogotá and Trade and Services Center from SENA in Villavicencio. The first group with a total of six students, five girls and one boy whose age ranged from 11 to 15 years old. As regards their language exposure towards learning, they attend two sessions of English per week, each one lasting 110 minutes following the

policies established by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and ranked in level A1.

According to statistics from Plan Foundation, about 75 percent of Colombian students of public schools have been involved in bullying (Pais, 2014), either as a bully or as a victim of teenage bullying. Consequently, most of the participants of this group avoided speaking in English because they felt afraid of being teased by their classmates when they made any pronunciation errors or lacked fluency.

The second group included six learners, four girls and two boys whose average age was 16 from grades ten to eleven. They attend a weekly ten-hour course and their English level is A1, according to the CEFR. In spite of creating appropriate social, emotional and physical conditions such as the use of IT equipment, the class layout, social relationships for learners to use the target language in communicative activities, they refused to speak as they affirmed feeling embarrassed about making mistakes. This is a typical response and is evidence of anxiety which leads to the interruption of fluency.

This study was also carried out at SENA-Trade and Services Center in Villavicencio-Meta. It was focused on a group of Industrial Mechanic students. In this class there were six students, four boys and two girls whose ages ranged from 17 to 35 years old. They had one four-hour sessions per week. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the learners' language level corresponds to A1. According to the results of the need analysis, most students felt nervous and insecure when they had to speak in English and the general consensus among them is that English lessons were limited to learning grammar and vocabulary which is reflected in their fluency abilities.

Bearing in mind the different characteristics of the three groups, this project aims to determine the influence of audio-blogs regarding learners' anxiety levels. For this purpose, two mediums were used as supporting evidence for the student's needs: a survey and a focus group, instruments which collected relevant information in order to identify and establish the different variables involved in the oral performance which can affect the speaking process. The end result of the methods carried out proved that students from the three groups displayed anxiety in the classroom (Horwitz, 2001) when they were expected to participate in speaking activities. Most of the learners stated that they avoided participating in oral activities with a willingness to accept lower grades rather than experiencing speaking anxiety in front of their peers. These findings (Appendix B) support the claim that anxiety may negatively affect the spoken performance of the students when they start the process for learning a foreign language, affecting their learning process not only in the short term but also in the long term.

1.2.2 Justification of problem's significance

Bearing in mind the importance of the spoken performance in the participants' academic, professional and personal lives, it is vital for language teachers to consider affective factors (Scovel, 1978) that hinder the learners' progress and level of proficiency in his or her target language such as anxiety, which is an important area of research because of its substantial negative impact on performance (Humpries, 2011).

The data collected in the needs analysis revealed that the population for this study was disadvantaged in their oral performance since the participants attributed their passive oral participation during speaking activities to the fear of speaking in public. In fact, the students preferred to get lower grades as it was mentioned before. These findings are the evidence of how

anxiety in the classroom may affect the quality of an individual's communication or willingness to communicate(Young, 1999), leading it to failure and school desertion.

1.2.3 Strategy selected to address problem

Considering the fact that nowadays in the Colombian context people send more audio messages than text messages because it is easy, personal and fun and that most of the students these days are comfortable speaking and listening in their mother language for extended periods of time (e.g. by phone) the researchers found it appropriate to leverage this habit through audio blogs. This tool might be a friendly and affordable technology that contributes to the social construction of knowledge and meaning making (Vygotsky, 1978) since with audio blogs learners can create audio projects through voice recordings, share them with fellow students, self-assess and also assess their peers (Race, 2001) in the EFL classroom. Additionally students can also monitor their own learning progress and take up the responsibility and ownership of learning by reviewing their speeches and reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses in terms of speaking competencies and the possible strategies to overcome their learning difficulties. Students can also use the commenting function and voice recorder features to interact with other students. Thus, the speaking experience might turn into a more rewarding and meaningful one both in and outside the classroom, which for the purpose of the present study favors both the students' speaking skills and the anxiety and nervousness when using the target language.

1.3 Research question(s) and objective(s)

In relation to the information provided above, this study's research question was *what is the possible influence of implementing audio-blogs in order to lower anxiety in oral fluency?*; the corresponding general objective was *to analyze the possible benefits that the use of audioblogs in EFL class have in the decreasing of anxiety and oral fluency improvement.*

1.4 Conclusion

As mentioned, anxiety may affect the development of oral skills because of fear and nervousness students experience in certain oral and communicative situations, in particular in the learning of a foreign language; McCroskey (1977) asserts that learners feel anxious or afraid when they have to communicate or interact in real situations; to this phenomenon Horwitz and Cope (1986) also claim that when learners communicate in a foreign language they experience apprehension of communication. In this respect negative feelings discourage communication. Oxford (2002) claims, positive anxiety helps learners to overcome difficulties when learning a foreign language while negative anxiety discourages them to continue the process successfully. Due to this reason, one the main aims of this project accounts is to examine the analysis of the process to lower anxiety in foreign language learners while performing orally.

Also, this study gives an account of the analysis of two other remarkable issues. The first one is the use of technological means, in this case, audioblogs to lower anxiety and foster speaking skills, and second, related to the relationship pauses and speech disfluency have on the increase and decrease of anxiety in speaking performance. Furthermore, other research studies are reviewed in this project which go beyond the aspects mentioned here and their purpose is to gain more insight into the relationship between anxiety and communicative competence and the way in which technological tools may affect it .

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework & State of the Art

2.1 Introduction

In order to identify the main patterns of anxiety in learners' spoken production, it was relevant to emphasize the main constructs which support the validity and relevance of the present study namely: Computer-Assisted Language Learning: CALL, specifically audio blogs and speaking skill, especially fluency. These key terms will be analyzed from the point of view of various authors and researchers, in order to discover how they are related and complement each other. The aim is to understand the impact of anxiety in the students' spoken performance and also to gauge the level of improvement in fluency and anxiety using audioblogs.

2.2 Theoretical framework

2.2.1 Anxiety

Learning a foreign language is a complex process which involves not only cognitive skills but also affective factors such as nervousness, anxiety, self esteem and motivation that might influence in a positive or negative way the students' learning process. Multiple researchers in language teaching have shown that there is a negative relationship between foreign language anxiety and the efficient use of language (e.g. MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Phillips, 1992; Aida, 1994; Gardner, 2005). Hence, the negative impact of such relationship became a support in the conduction of this research study because it evidences the influence of anxiety on learners' speaking skills.

Some teachers and practitioners might think language is merely linguistic, cognitive or communicative. However, in some cases language learners have to deal with some affective issues while learning a foreign language; it is a huge responsibility for teachers and institutions

to guarantee the best environment for students to overcome such emotional drawbacks. On this matter, Krashen (1989) posits the affective filter can become an obstacle for learning a second language by the influence of certain negative emotional responses (anxiety, self-doubt and boredom) in a specific environment. He also claims these emotions are similar to a filter that can increase or reduce the rapport between the speaker and the listener, thus, the input is not processed correctly, understanding input as the useful language produced by the speaker to be understood by the listener. Bearing this in mind, affective factors, such as anxiety, play an important role in learning, especially in communicative settings since it can fragmentarily prevent or promote the communication among speakers. For instance, when learners feel anxious, they tend to avoid using the target language because it might increase the affective filter.

As concerns the bearing of affective factors when learning a foreign language, Brown (2007) also analyzes a set of human behavior features similar to anxiety that may impede learning a second language, such as illustration, self-esteem, inhibition, risk-taking, introversion, extroversion, among others. These attitudes and emotions are developed according to the received stimuli in the educational setting, Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) claim it is necessary to use language in a non-threatening context which creates a friendly classroom atmosphere, considering that language errors are natural in the process of language acquisition (Dornyei, 2001). Due to this fact, when learning a second language, students can experience some of those emotions and increase stress while developing classroom activities (Hewitt & Stefenson, 2011).

Language anxiety has been defined as the fear of apprehension that learners experience when they have to perform in a second language (MacIntyre, 2007). For the case of our

population, one of the most marked obstacles is when students are performing orally. This type of anxiety may not be considered as general anxiety, because it appears in language learning scenarios and foreign language communication as speaking activities, tests and written exercises (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). The level of anxiety depends on the context the learner is immersed in and can be experienced informally and formally, the former, when interacting with others in real contexts and the latter, in the classroom (Horwitz & Cope, 1986). In this scenario, Young (1990) claims that learners face one of the biggest challenges when speaking in the target language since it becomes the most-anxiety producing experience publicly; to illustrate, learners sometimes may not have done enough knowledge of the target language or they might be naturally afraid of making mistakes or feeling embarrassed.

In the same line of thought, Oxford (2002) analyses anxiety from two perspectives by claiming rising anxiety depends on one's personality, that is why certain individuals tend to be more anxious in normal situations, while other individuals only experience a state of anxiety in front of specific situations. Furthermore, Oxford (2002) also identified other types of anxiety which are named as harmful and helpful anxiety, well known as debilitating and facilitative (Alpert & Haber, 1960; Scovel, 1978). In this perspective, the author defines helpful or facilitative anxiety as positive in the second language learning process since students take advantage of difficulties to succeed in the natural use of the target language, for example, when they participate actively in speaking activities to get a good grade and to be more competent among their classmates. On the other side, harmful and debilitating anxiety might impede students learning a language because they seem to inevitably refuse to use the target language to communicate ideas or thoughts.

Having said that, it might be concluded that anxiety is an affective variable that debilitates the achievement of students' goals and speaking performance in language learning contexts. In light of that, anxiety needs to be uncovered and fed through effective and meaningful educational practices in and outside the classroom, such as the use of audioblogs, which may help students to encourage self-confidence and promote the development and strengthening of speaking skills through genuine interactions.

2.2.2 CALL: Computer-Assisted Language Learning

Computer-Assisted Language Learning is defined by Egbert (2005) as the process of learning a language with and around computer technologies (p. 4). Correspondingly, Richards and Schmidt (2002) also define CALL as "the use of a computer in the teaching or learning of a second or foreign language." In this research project, the researchers decided to take into account the variables described by Egbert (2005) having in mind the main components of CALL he described: the learners' thoughts, behaviors, motivations, experiences and understanding; the status and structure of the language; the context, bearing in mind the physical and temporal environment and the social, economic, cultural and linguistic influences; the technological tools, the participants' use, such as personal digital tools: cell phones, laptops, digital cameras, software or other devices; the tasks that will be developed and the peers and teachers, taking into account the impact use of ICTs might have in the learning process (Egbert, 2005)

Considering socio-cultural perspectives of CALL, Warschauer (2005) states that "the incorporation of tools or mediational means does not simply facilitate action that could have occurred without them, but rather, by being included in the process of behavior, alters the entire flow and structure of mental functions" (p. 42). Incidentally, for the present study, technology, in

particular the use of audioblogs, is seen as a tool that mediates and transforms human activity, as regards, oral performance, which and contributes to create meaningful knowledge and respond to the speaking skills objectives of the target population (Warshauer, 2005).

Regarding the aspects mentioned above, CALL is a relevant construct for this research, not only because it empowers students in their learning process but also because it allows to mediate and transform the student's knowledge. This becomes a potential feature to respond to the emerging trends that the new education suggests: learn, unlearn and relearn (Toffler, 1973). This means, learners are in a constant process of change and adaptation by updating their previous knowledge to their current necessities, modifying their outdated ideas and concepts and creating new ways to know the world. Considering this, CALL may help language learners not only reduce anxiety in oral practice, but also to encourage fluency in speaking, motivation and collaborative work among them by providing a new learning environment which takes into consideration the real learners' cognitive needs. In those contexts learners may feel more confident when participating in oral activities, since they do not feel afraid of making mistakes and do not find their classmate's response as a potential threat, so that they can take advantage of active and crucial self and peer assessment processes.

2.2.2.1 Audioblogs

According to Huann and Thong (2006) audioblogging is an extension of blogs, which is defined by Nam Kin (2007) as the social network software that enhances intercultural communication, giving the learners the possibility of communicating with other languages speakers. Similarly, Hyland (2009) states that: "blogs have emerged as distinctive kind of texts with a characteristic way to commenting, arguing, interacting and making sense" (p. 225)

providing users with facilities to organize thoughts before interacting with others. That is to say, in blogging the users can express themselves by choosing from different texts, images, records and even the human voice. Consequently, in audioblogs, the users substitute the text by voice narration records, which allow the students to express their feelings and thoughts to peers and other audiobloggers (Nam Kin, 2007). The most important features audioblogs have in education are: allowing students to create and post their work, responding to e-learning scenarios, affording online interaction through blogs, sharing information worldwide, fostering engagement in a collaborative learning and the enhancing of higher order thinking skills (Huann & Thong, 2006).

From a sociocultural perspective, blogs work as a symbolic artifact by which students can mediate the knowledge and regulate it (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007 p. 202). Students' thoughts are materialized in form of speech, text, graphics or video, and in that way students can build knowledge and make meaningful verbal products when they interact with the multiple media located at this social level, in this case the blogs. Another point for in the use of blogs has to do with the fact that they provide students with the chance of giving feedback on their peers' products, allowing them to scaffold their peers' performance and freely but responsibly offer their point of views and opinions following assessment procedures (Huann & Thong, 2006). To conduct this study, the researchers expect students to have positive results on two areas, firstly, by lowering anxiety through the mediation of blogs, as well as improving their performance with a voice recorder and scaffolding their peers, providing learners with a befitting environment to speak English more confidently. Alternatively, to Nam Kim (2007) blogging interactivity helps to enhance motivation because the expectancy among bloggers is to receive feedback or comments from other bloggers, which will help students to improve their spoken performance. Additionally, learners get a higher level of learning satisfaction because they will not feel the

negative peer pressure through verbal bullying which will encourage them to participate freely and becoming become self-motivated by blogging, and therefore, more skillful in oral performance.

2.2.3 Speaking skill

Speaking develops naturally in the mother tongue because people grow up being exposed to a large variety of language input. This exposure helps people acquire knowledge from the context because the characteristics of the speakers they grow up listening and speaking to, as well as the different topics and situations they learn to master over the years.

When learning a foreign language, what is supposed to be easy in the mother tongue as it deals with speaking, often becomes a difficult task in the target language because of the level of complexity due to fact that it is a different rule system which the brain takes time to assimilate. Furthermore, language participants' learning process has been, for decades, focused on grammar lessons – teaching grammar rules and relegating to a second place speaking and listening skills- which affect the process by impeding their use the target language. This fact ineluctably halts communication because learners have not properly received comprehensible input (Krashen, 1989) which increases the affective filter and second language becomes much harder to acquire.

Speaking is a productive skill that requires the learners to be able to use the language in a successful way, making a difference between the specific knowledge of the language and the skill in using it (Bygate, 1997). When students are learning a foreign language, they tend to emphasize the specific knowledge rather than the skill because they do not have the real need of using it. For that reason, it is vital for this research project to give the students tools for starting to practice this skill in a comfortable and meaningful way. For such a reason, in the study, three

basic functions of speaking are contemplated: talk as interaction, talk as transaction and talk as performance (Richards, 2006). To this respect, this research project emphasizes the skill in use in communicative skills as transaction, having in mind the main focus of the planned speaking activities is giving and receiving information. For research purposes, accuracy is not a priority since learners at this level are focused on the successfulness of the message; thus, the phenomenon to be analyzed relies on the improvement of fluency in the participants rather than the accuracy of the message.

The speaking process in the foreign language classroom requires that students are not just dealing with vocabulary, accent and intonation or grammar but acquiring spoken fluency by understanding the contents. Gradually, learners must be able to organize ideas, codify, listen and comprehend reading (Krashen, 1989), as this is the process students go through to get meaningful input and be able to produce output. These are important facts which act as evidence that it is fundamental for teachers to develop activities in which students use different features of language in real contexts.

Comprehensible Input constitutes relevant data to this research project considering researchers suggest audio blogs, as a digital medium, can guide students to monitor their speech, since learners can record their utterances, self- correct and give peer feedback. Also, audio blogs are supposed to be a good strategy for helping students to control their harmful anxiety when speaking, and move from harmful anxiety to helpful or facilitative anxiety, which leads students to compete and scaffold their process assertively (Brown, 2007).

2.2.3.1 *Fluency*

A review of the literature on foreign language has paid special attention to fluency since it is not easy to be defined because of the amount of characteristics it covers. bearing in mind it is related to the learner's communicative competence (Pawley & Syder, 1983; Olynak, Anglejan, & Sankoff, 1990). Fluency is one concerning feature of language for teachers and linguists since it is not only related to the speed learners can speak at, the content of message or the accuracy of language; it also includes other aspects as Lennon (1990) defines fluency as the highest point on a scale that measures spoken performance of a foreign language and it refers to overall oral proficiency covering the distribution and duration of pauses, types of pauses, amount of syllables per minute, hesitation and accuracy of language, as well. From one perspective, Skehan (1996) does not focus on the speed learners take to deliver messages, but he claims it is the ability learners have to use language in real time with little pausing or hesitation, on the other side, Pawley and Syder (2000) define fluency as the ability learners have to use lexis, syntax and larger discourse structures avoiding pauses, hesitations and violation of clauses boundaries to communicate –full stops and other punctuation marks- in complex and familiar situations. For this research project, Lennon (1990) definition is fully considered to account for delimiting the concept of fluency, as its objectives undergo the learners' English level and the amount of pauses they make when speaking.

The evidence on fluency implications in the learners' spoken performance deals with the precepts discussed by Thornbury (2005) who states fluency might involve both accuracy and fluency. Accuracy-oriented tasks are dedicated to focus on linguistic forms which intake refers to the constant correction of errors and, as in fluency-oriented tasks, the content of what the speaker says is thought to be important. That is to say when considering fluency, learners must strike a

balance between the numbers of words they join in a chunk of language and the accurate use of language to convey meaning. Brown (2004) claims a fluent person is the one who can use language structures accurately paying attention to content rather than form in a normal speed in communicative situations. Nevertheless, Carroll (1980) states that fluency might be measured in all the levels of performance; for example, in an advanced level the student speaks at normal speed and responds promptly, with little hesitation and not too slowly which indicates a satisfactory performance; also, at intermediate level, it is commonly observed that there are some breaks in comprehension and the speech is less than native tempo; in addition, at basic level, the speaker is expected to have a slow enunciation which is focused on the message rather than the speed of the language and, for that reason the speech is uneven. As the research topic is aimed at lowering anxiety, the phenomenon to be measured is the possible improvement of the participants' speech by focusing on the fluency they had at the beginning of the pedagogical implementation and the possible impact it may have through all the subsequent different planned stages.

To this point, only the fact of evaluation constitutes a challenge since to assess fluency is not an easy task; probably, it is why Cohen (1994) claims it is impossible to reduce it to speed or ease of speech terms. Because of this, other researchers have suggested it is possible to measure some features of fluency with the purpose of identifying disfluency phenomenon such as repetition and false starts. For instance, Lennon (1990) proposes the speed of delivery, and hesitation markers. Bearing in mind that the present study seeks to lower anxiety in spoken performance analyzing the number of pauses when learners record their speech by means of audio blogs, it may be unquestionably a worthwhile strategy.

2.2.3.2 *Pauses*

Learners' communicative competence in fluency may be affected by factors such as pauses. In deed, pauses are understood as periods of silence of two seconds or more which first and foremost, represent external expressions of speakers in cognitive planning and processing (Butterworth, 1980; Pawley & Syder, 2000), and significantly, can be used by learners in a conscious way as communication strategies. Specifically, Ellis (1990) suggests there must be a balance between fluency and accuracy that might be observed in the number of pauses the speaker takes. For instance, learners who are more concerned about fluency might make many mistakes, but simultaneously, decrease the amount of pauses; while speakers who pay more attention to accuracy might increase the number of pauses because of the excessive control they focus on the channel of communication.

All things considered, there are five features of fluency regarding pauses; first there are fluent pause groups, which are known as grammatically intact pause groups, when speakers use them sentence meaning is not diminished because they occur at phrasal; secondly, clause boundaries at the end of the sentences; third split pause groups which violate phrase or clause boundaries are generally in the middle of these. Fourth, false start pause groups evidence the speaker's concerns of using language accurately and having contact with the interlocutor (Olynack et al., 1990, p. 141) because they include self-repairs involving two or more utterances; similarly, happens with fillers which are one or two words without semantic meaning and finally we find rate of speech. This is a more complex process since speakers are more aware of the number of words expressed in a minute (Thornbury 2005; Gorsuch, 2011). For this project, the researchers want to focus on split pauses, which are the ones affecting participants' speech, because they are related to increasing anxiety (Gorsuch, 2011)

2.3 State of the art

In spite of the existence of many research studies seeking to lower anxiety by means of numerous artifacts such as radio shows, podcastings, blogs and recorded journals and different projects aiming to enhance speaking skills through the use of audio blogs or voice recorders (Hsu, Wang & Comac, 2008; Cañas, 2012; Castrillon, 2010; Fandiño, 2010; Huann & Thong, 2010; Ashton-Hay & Brookes, 2011; Hasan & Hoon, 2013; Ibrahim & Mat Daud, 2013; Önem and Ergenç, 2013; McNeil, 2014; Siyli & Kafes, 2015), little or no particular work has focused its attention or research procedures on reflecting upon the impact which audio blogs may have in lowering anxiety in speaking performance as this research study does, specifically the improvement of fluency which has not been considered in the existing research.

The negative relationship between anxiety and language learning and the impact it has on spoken performance has been analyzed by multiple authors, Önem and Ergenç (2013) developed a research study to determine the impact of a testing teaching model in anxiety and success for English language teaching. The model of teaching for anxiety and success aimed to reduce anxiety levels, and increase students' learning success and enjoyment. The emphasis on grammar classes to determine students' scores and the lack of analysis in the before, during and after teaching phases indicated some limitations of the cited study.

With regard to the use of audioblogs and audiorecordings tools to lower anxiety and foster communication skills in foreign language, many research studies have been conducted (Hsu, Wang & Comac, 2008; Huann & Thong, 2010; Ashton-Hay & Brookes, 2011; Hasan & Hoon, 2013; Ibrahim & Mat Daud, 2013; McNeil, 2014; Siyli & Kafes, 2015). The results of these studies revealed that the voice recording tools to manage oral assignments, interact with

learners and evaluate performance outcomes through the submission and archiving of oral tasks, helped learners to assess their oral performance efficiently and effectively by giving and receiving feedback from peers and teachers; additionally the participants overcame negative affective factors such as anxiety, lack of motivation and low self-esteem and enhance oral skills, mainly speaking and listening (Hsu, Wang & Comac, 2008; Huann & Thong, 2010; McNeil, 2014; Siyli & Kafes, 2015). Other researchers have analyzed the contribution of podcasting in the enhancement of target language skills by analyzing the learners' linguistic outcomes - pronunciation-, fluency and listening comprehension- and the learners' perceptions towards podcasts-opinions, motivations, attitudes and learning styles (Ashton-Hay & Brookes, 2011; Hasan & Hoon, 2013). The results of these studies showed podcasts facilitate language learning and assist them in developing their language skills.

Another useful study is the research project carried out by Ducate and Lomicka (2009) who sought to improve pronunciation in the second language and valued the effect on learners' attitudes toward pronunciation by means of podcasts. In this study researchers completed a survey to monitor students' perceptions, before during and after, on the improvement of pronunciation and their attitudes towards the project. The results of this study showed the podcast project was perceived positively by students, since they appreciated the feedback given after each recording; they also fostered creativity through extemporaneous podcasts. Similarly, Appel and Borges (2012) developed a project to promote second language oral tasks with audio blogs; it showed positive results regarding the use of audioblogs, for instance, students could improve their communication skills and they felt more comfortable, even though when they were expected to record a video of their tasks they tended to feel anxious and uncomfortable; the researchers of this study project concluded there were some limitations since teachers needed to

be trained to decide the appropriate technological tools and implement strategies to give meaningful feedback. Considering the fact learners felt anxious during the recordings because of the fear to be negatively evaluated and the self-perceived speaking ability (Kitano, 2001), it was relevant to clarify they were not being assessed and raise their learning awareness to identify their language strengths.

Multiple studies have focused on the anxiety present in Colombian's English classrooms and learning environments; some of them identified the anxiety factors that affect foreign language students' oral participation (Cañas, 2012; Castrillon, 2010; Fandiño, 2010) and others were focused on the effects of anxiety in oral communication and learning (Ariza, 2012; Lafont, 2009; Zapata, 2007) as general avoidance, physical actions and physical symptoms presented at the moment of speaking. The use of ICT tools as Skype and podcasting were considered in order to lower anxiety (Aristizabal, 2009; Romaña, 2015) and improve speaking and fluency.

In spite of not using the same technological tool, the action research study proposed by Lemos (2010) intended to foster eighth graders' speaking confidence through the creation of an online radio show. Its starting points were: speaking confidence, the use of radio in schools and cooperative learning strategies; this research project has a strong connection with the project proposed in this study because it uses a technological tool (radio shows) for mediating the students' language acquisition and lowering anxiety when developing speaking skills. The results of this study showed that students were capable of raising learning awareness by creating a healthy environment and overcoming anxiety. With the purpose of identifying anxiety patterns, the researcher used students' logs, teacher's journal, a video recording and an oral interview; these instruments enrich the data collection since the researcher analyzed the participants' perceptions and reflections about their possible advances, improvements and failures, as well as

their emotions when using target language . Similarly, Orozco (2013) enhanced language skills- new vocabulary and pronunciation-, increased awareness in learning and raised self-confidence in forth and fifth graders by means of communicative activities; this research study feeds the present study with enough insights to figure out the accurate way to overcome negative affective factors and improve learners' speaking skill.

2.4 Conclusion

The theories mentioned above and the previous research studies regarding the definitions have shown that anxiety might have an impact on the learners' speaking performance. That is why the use of audioblogs as a technological tool may not only decrease anxiety levels but also enhance speaking skills. In addition, in fluency there are some signs to identify language accuracy and cognitive difficulties; for this research project split pauses were chosen in order to measure the level of improvement using audioblogs for improving anxiety in oral fluency. The descriptions of the definitions evidence the need to develop a research study in which anxiety as an affective factor might enhance or impede the development of speaking skills with the support of audioblogs.

Chapter 3: Research Design

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the design of this research project, which focuses on the use of an easy and affordable tool such as audio-blogs to lower anxiety in students' oral fluency. The type of research is laid out, as is the teacher's role, the context, the constraints and the impediments.

3.2 Type of study

This research project is mainly qualitative in nature but with a mixed method design described by Creswell (2007) as the procedure for collecting, analyzing, interpreting, integrating and reporting qualitative and quantitative data. This result is appropriate to gain an understanding of the positive or negative effects anxiety has on students' spoken performance, and how audio-blogging could help them to lower negative anxiety.

Bearing in mind the main inquiry of the research project, the type of research that better fits the purpose of the study is action research. According to Burns (2010) "action research involves taking a self-reflective, critical, and systematic approach to explore real contexts". Likewise, taking into account the result of the needs analysis (Appendix B) which was carried out in the first semester of this research project, the most consistent type of research to support it was collaborative action research, which Butt et al. (1992) illustrates a group of stakeholders cooperating together, to study a particular phenomena, and finally suggest actions which improve practice. With great regard to this research project, the researchers are expected to develop collaborative action research through a systematic process including four important stages: planning, acting, observing and reflecting (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988) which could help connect theory and practice in order to transform educational practices.

3.3 Context

Three different educational settings were chosen to carry out this project. IED Ofelia Uribe de Acosta and IED Luis Ángel Arango in Bogotá, Colombia and SENA (Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje) in Villavicencio, META, Colombia. The first setting is a public school located in Usme, at El Bosque neighborhood. The school currently has 5000 students per shift. In its afternoon shift there are six groups of pre-school students with about 30 students per group and fifteen groups of primary school students (forty in each grade) and fourteen in high school. In regards to foreign language teaching, the school offers an hour of English classes weekly in elementary and three hours weekly in high school level. Considering that there is not a single teaching methodology the school demands, EFL teachers may design their own materials to meet the students' needs. As this is a mega-school, English classes are sometimes interrupted by the diverse activities the Education Authority proposes.

At high school level, the majority of the students are aged 12 to 17 and most of them belong to the socio-economic strata 0 and 1 and they are also affected by issues related to substance abuse, domestic violence, malnutrition and abandonment problems, which are linked to a low academic achievement performance (Ferrel Ortega, Velez Mendoza, & Ferrel Ballestas (2014).

The second setting where this research study was conducted was IED Luis Angel Arango in the Fontibon area of La Cabaña neighborhood; this is a public school that has two shifts, both for elementary and high school level. Regarding English classes, the school offers two hours in elementary and four in secondary level. This educational institution offers a ten hours weekly extracurricular English course called Media Fortalecida for tenth and eleventh graders. The purpose of this project is to provide students with the chance to study university programs; this

program is commonly supported by a university, which is in charge of developing the syllabi and choosing the textbooks. Bearing in mind the location of the school, the majority of the students belong to social strata 1 and 2.

Finally, this research project was implemented with Industrial Mechanics apprentices at SENA- Industry and Services Center from Villavicencio-Meta, a national government vocational training institution. SENA's main objective is to provide holistic professional training, not only academically but by means of a hands-on approach based on the development of production projects through competences and outcomes. In the same way, SENA promotes bilingualism through face-to-face and virtual courses to pertinently connect the educational supply with national and international labor needs; the group chosen for this study received four hour sessions a week.

3.3.1 Participants

Considering the different contexts the researchers worked in, it was necessary to select three groups bearing in mind the participants English level, correspondingly A1, in spite of the difference of age among them.

This study was developed with 20 seventh grade students at Ofelia Uribe de Acosta Public School, aged between 11 and 15. According to the Common European framework of Reference (CEFR), the students were placed in A1 level. They received 110 minutes of English classes per week, and they were motivated to learn English. The affective needs of the participants included gaining confidence when performing oral activities since students felt afraid of participating orally because of the serious bullying problem in the class when somebody made a mistake in speaking performance.

These students were not orally competent in speaking English, which made them opt to rather be more engaged in listening and reading activities. For such verbal tasks, learners prefer first to write in their notebook what they are supposed to say, and next, read it. There is the common belief and experience that learners face too many difficulties concerning self-confidence and respect when somebody speaks, even in Spanish.

Nevertheless, positively some of them use basic commands and simple utterances in the classroom, as well as communicating needs or making requests. In these cases, they scaffold their classmates' process, as students constantly work in pairs or small groups they support their classmates who face language learning difficulties. According to Brown (2007), students' predominant learning styles are visual and auditory. Our own students prefer observing charts and images, watching videos and listening to short dialogues rather than doing kinesthetic activities.

From the second group, 20 students from Luis Angel Arango school are also participants in this research study. Their average age is 15 and they are studying tenth and eleventh grade. According to the CEFR students are A1 level. These students attend a ten hour English course per week. This particular group of learners need to increase motivation and self-confidence in order for them to use target language to communicate their ideas and thoughts, since many of them refuse to communicate in the target language because they feel embarrassed or discouraged; additionally, it is imperative to consider most of them are teenagers who, as Young (1990) states, are in the stage of shaping their personalities, and as a consequence when they make mistakes, they easily feel embarrassed and anxious.

As this group of students receives constant input in the language classroom, they have already developed certain skills to infer vocabulary and some grammar structures, but they lack

speaking strategies since they are not able to hold a conversation, even though they express utterances to give their points of view, they do not use linking words and connectors in order to make their speech clearer. They also show constant L1 interference and transfer into target language (Krashen, 1989).

This research project is also based on a third group of Industrial Mechanics, apprentices at SENA- Industry and Services center from Villavicencio-Meta, a national government vocational training institution. In this class, there are 17 students, 15 boys and two girls whose ages range from 17 to 35 years old. They had four hour sessions a week. According to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), the learners' language level corresponded to A1.

Considering that students may feel uncomfortable using the target language in speaking performance, it is necessary to create opportunities in order for students to receive comprehensible input (Krashen, 1989) develop high self-confidence and motivation and therefore produce and communicate meaningfully; in a supportive classroom free of constraints.

For the purpose of providing better opportunities to develop students' spoken performance, first, learners need to acquire language in context to communicate aspects of their daily life. What is more, they need to do exercises so that they can infer language rules, improve accuracy and appropriacy and develop analytical thinking, as well as experiential and contextual ability (Sternberg, 1985). Additionally, students need to develop strategies to be autonomous, thus, they might learn by discovering or creating rather than remembering. Finally, they can also benefit from imitating and solving problems which involve the material (Richards & Rodgers, 1986), in this case audioblogs might help them to be more creative and find strategies to overcome language difficulties.

The researchers selected six students from each group as the sample population for their research, following Patton (1990) model on purposeful random sampling. This strategy consists on taking small samples randomly to provide rich data to support the credibility of the study since participants are not chosen based on specific characteristics, but at random. For this research study, the participants were coded from S1a to S6c, this with the purpose of guaranteeing the students' confidentiality and applying the ethical considerations.

Table 1. Students' codes

Ofelia Uribe de Acosta IED	Luis Angel Arango IED	SENA
S1a	S1b	S1c
S2a	S2b	S2c
S3a	S3b	S3c
S4a	S4b	S4c
S5a	S5b	S5c
S6a	S6b	S6c

3.3.2 Researcher's role

Taking into consideration the role of the teacher in qualitative Action Research, it is fundamental to fulfill the roles of researcher and reflective teachers. Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) stated that the teacher has to be involved in four basic steps in Action research: planning, action, observation and reflection. During these steps, teachers become planners, implementers, observers and reflective teachers, which allow a continuous qualitative action research process.

Consequently, it is a continuous process that could be overlapped by the different steps; the researcher-teacher could be an implementer and observer at the same time, as well as one who reflects and plans. It means all the roles are reciprocal and connected.

3.3.3 Ethical considerations

Taking into account that the chosen populations for working in this research project are minors, it was necessary to ask for their parents' or tutors' consent in order to implement the pedagogical intervention. For that reason, all the parents have been informed about the main objectives of the research project, as well as the importance the results would have on the students' English performance and the educational community. Importantly, anonymity in the results of the studies has been guaranteed, having no influence on the student's' partial or final grades.

3.4 Data collection instruments

The data collection instruments were designed to analyze the possible impact and effectiveness of audioblogs to lower anxiety in students' spoken performance (Appendix C)

3.4.1 Descriptions and justifications

3.4.1.1 *Survey (See Appendix C)*

This instrument is defined as "a method of getting information on certain selected topics from a number of people" (Wallace, 1998, p.260). During the data collection process the survey (Appendix C) is applied at the beginning and at the end of the pedagogical intervention, in order to record the changes about the students' perceptions related to the objectives of this research project.

3.4.1.2 *Students' log (See Appendix D)*

According to Stephens and Winterbottom (2010), the student learning log “can encourage personal reflection, analysis, planning and evaluation, and can help students synthesize knowledge and reflect upon its impact on their learning and personal experiences through self-enquiry” (p. 73). As a data collection instrument, every student’s learning log (Appendix D) is applied at the end of each session in which students are expected to work on the audio-blog (in the process of planning, and providing peer feedback) in order to know how they feel in the process and what kind of anxiety is present.

3.4.1.3 *Audioblogs (See Appendix E)*

In this study the audioblogs (Appendix E) are major aids to the researchers to identify the fluency features that indicate the reduction of anxiety in the participants’ spoken performance. These instruments have the accurate property of providing concrete evidence to identify the fluency features and affective factors that might influence the reduction of anxiety in the participants’ spoken performance’. For the purpose of this study, www.blogger.com was used to share the information in the blogs and www.podbean.com was used as the recording tool.

3.4.1.4 *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (See Appendix F)*

The Foreign Language classroom Anxiety scale (Appendix F) designed by Horwitz and Cope (1986) helps learners to state the average measurement of anxiety. These researchers divided the scale into different categories to determine the level of anxiety: fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension and test anxiety whilst Aida (1994) mentions speech anxiety, fear of failing, comfort and negative attitudes. For the purpose of this study this scale was applied at the end and the beginning of the implementation and three categories have been

selected: anxiety caused because of perception of low level and fear of being corrected, communication apprehension and anxiety in specific situations.

3.4.2 Validation and piloting

Validity and reliability are fundamental features in the design and development of the data collection and data analysis. The qualitative character of this research project is valid when it is considered that “data validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 133).

On the other hand, reliability is reached thanks to the use of triangulation, defined by Cohen et al. (2007) as “the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behavior” (p.141). In this research project, the researchers work with three instruments in order to guarantee the validity and reliability of the results: a survey, a student's' learning log and the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale designed by Horwitz (1986).

To have certainty and reliability about the efficacy of the instruments, it was necessary to implement a piloting stage with the participants. With regard to the piloting, the purpose relies on verifying the pertinence of the instruments, and if those provide enough data for the further analysis. For this piloting stage three participants of each institution have been enrolled, and according to the results, some amendments have been markedly done to the three instruments. .

3.5 Conclusion

The research design of the study is based on the students' needs, context, ethical considerations, data collection instruments and research question of the project. This type of study is determined thanks to a procedure that follows different step-by-step processes such as: obtaining the schools' consents as well as the study's participants, moreover, the definition of the

researchers' role, the selection and analysis of the data collection, its instruments and, also the implementation of the data. These issues contribute to outline a research design to set the implementation stage described in the chapter below.

Chapter 4: Pedagogical Intervention and Implementation

4.1 Introduction

In order to implement the use of audio blogs to lower anxiety in oral fluency, it is relevant to state the teaching principles that support the pedagogical intervention, including for the theoretical background that has enriched the learning process and that were adapted to this research project. The vision of curriculum, learning and language are described, as are the main characteristics and the cycles of the pedagogical implementation. Instructional design and the lesson planning are also described.

4.2 Visions of language, learning, and curriculum

4.2.1 Vision of language

Content, activity and curriculum depend on the way language is perceived. For this reason English lessons need to focus on one theoretical view in order to guide the horizon of the language teaching process. According to Vygotsky (1978), language is a social concept that is developed through social interactions which involves not only a child's exposure to words but also an interdependent process of growth between thought and language. This is why language is essential in forming thought and determining personality features. These statements take into account the influence of language on the way people perceive things and the surrounding world, which can be evidenced in Boroditsky's (2010) statements: "Language shapes the way we think, and determines what we can think about" (p. 65) and implies a profound reflection about daily practice in the process of the English teaching-learning processes.

Language is seen as the bridge to create a meaningful environment, where the English classes are planned from the students context and interests and teachers promote communicative

success rather than formal accuracy by providing the participants the opportunity to discover strengths and potential improvements they have when speaking the foreign language.

In this process of interpretation and interaction, language plays an important role which in Vygotsky's theory is developed from social interactions, and aims to establish meaningful communication purposes so that effective learning can truly happen by means of interactive processes of discussion, negotiation and sharing. The main principles of Vygotsky's theory: "the zone of proximal development", an important area in which with guidance and encouragement from a knowledgeable person the student is able to improve and succeed in spite of one's own difficulties, in order to develop higher mental functions through sensitive guidance, allowing the information to internalize by modeling behaviors and guiding instructions. Interestingly, through audio blogs students may explore multiple abilities creating, reconstructing and producing meaningful texts related to their context: their family, favorite food and free time activities, their likes and dislikes, their dreams, goals and expectations; where upon, such educational tools may open up the opportunity for learners to acknowledge basic principles and information of their environment and culture, which according to Vygotsky, influences their cognitive development as well.

4.2.2 Vision of learning

Bearing in mind the students' cognitive and affective needs; the continual lack of confidence of the students to participate in oral tasks due to their fear of making mistakes and being mocked by their classmates and the insufficient opportunities for students to participate in classroom communication; it is necessary to consider the socio-constructivism theory by Vygotsky (1986) in which learning is described as an active process since people learn to construct knowledge instead of acquiring it; as a consequence, this knowledge must be connected

to learner's previous experiences, authentic contexts, settings and situations. Additionally, through audioblogs students have the possibility of self, peer and teacher assessment and correction, which enable them to reflect upon goals already achieved and acknowledge their strengths and weaknesses.

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), social interaction and collaboration are essential components of situated learning — learners become involved in a “community of practice” which embodies certain beliefs and behaviors to be acquired. Brown et al. (1989) emphasize the idea of cognitive apprenticeship: “Cognitive apprenticeship supports learning in a domain by enabling students to acquire, develop and use cognitive tools in authentic domain activity. Learning is developed both outside and inside school through collaborative and social interaction and the social construction of knowledge. In this view, the use of audioblogs can be a tool for empowering students to be part of a social community in which the English learning process progresses in and outside the classroom through collaborative and cooperative work between teacher and students and their peers who provide constant feedback. According to Dweck (1999) External feedback influences how students feel about themselves (positively or negatively) and what and how they learn . Therefore it can be concluded feedback might foster self confidence and thus help participants to improve oral production in the foreign language.

4.2.3 Vision of curriculum

Thinking about curriculum implies changing the perception in the way we think by motivating learning, enhancing knowledge and skills. Kelly (1999) suggests an inclusive curriculum in which all of one's potential and capacities will be cultivated and amplified to the fullest possible degree. That is to say, curriculum is not only related to the fact of learning, but

also generating new processes and projects which encourage students' better performance in academic, personal and professional area.

It is necessary to consider the concept of curriculum as the process of planning, designing, monitoring and evaluating programs to satisfy the needs and wishes of practioners, stakeholders and administratives, the local community and the newest reforms to avoid null and TENOR (Teaching English for No Obvious Reasons) programs and strengthen the creation of TELLO (Teaching English Based on Learner's Learning Objective) ones (Wilson, 2004) through the selection of appropriate contents, learner arrangements and groupings, and the creation, adaptation or developing of good materials and learning tasks.

In the setting of this study, assessment and evaluation tools were intended to apply the essential knowings of comprehensive education such as know, know-how and know how to be (Tobón, 2008) included during the English lessons and in which students have the opportunity to develop and acquire cognitive and metacognitive skills that allow them to have a positive performance in real contexts and face societal challenges

According to Habermas' theory there are three different modes of how knowledge is constructed: The technical curriculum, focused on transference of knowledge and skills to students, the practical curriculum, related to the construction of meaning and the emancipatory curriculum, concerned with students' autonomy and active participation in social and political reality. Each one of them is immersed throughout the different stages of a class. This study offers a practical perspective since audioblogs allow students to judge, interpret and create new knowledge together (Grundy, 1987). In this sense, students become active and critical participants of authentic situations rather than obsolet products.

Through integral educational settings students might decrease their negative anxiety and fear when developing oral tasks through communicative activities that help them to reinforce their oral practice by refining their ideas and autonomy and profiting their personal social-cultural linguistic experience to provide peer feedback and scaffold their learning process.

4.3 Instructional design

4.3.1 Lesson planning

The lesson plans were designed according to the institutions' curricula and syllabi. Also, at least 20 computers were needed to make the audio blog and record, as well as an internet connection, 20 headphones and a quiet room in order to make the recordings. Podbean.com was the platform to be used in the audio blogs since it is an easy and powerful way to produce good audio quality and manageable file sizes that enhance the listening and speaking experience by sharing educational content such as presentations, videos, interview stories, creating newscasts, holding debates and running radio shows.

For the pedagogical implementation, it was necessary to create a special didactic unit (Appendix H) regarding the number of hours, the materials, the activities, the research goals and the specific aspects of each one of the institutions because students needed to be engaged in contextualized learning based on their real life situations, needs, interests and desires which make their learning experience meaningful

In addition to the proposed didactic unit, the researchers planned a specific lesson planning model considering each one of the stages in the class; this lesson plan is a sample and corresponds to the introductory session (Appendix F).

After finishing the pedagogical intervention it was necessary to analyze and compare all the collected data in each institution to determine the impact of audioblogs on the students' spoken performance and to interpret the results.

4.3.2 Implementation

The pedagogical implementation was divided into three cycles with a total number of 32 hours, taking into account the previous stages in the research project. The first cycle's main objectives consist of introducing the students to the research questions and the objectives; also, on how to make an audio-blog by sharing their work and talking about their particular learning experiences. The second cycle main objective dedicated to the students' application of the previous knowledge about the use of audio-blogs, by carrying out the same process, but with different content (last vacation), in order to compare the performance in the first cycle with the latter one. In the third cycle, the participants created a dialogue in pairs for encouraging interaction about childhood anecdotes and for researchers to analyze whether working in pairs had an influence on decreasing anxiety or not.

The first cycle was developed in five sessions; the topic to be developed was student's personal information since it is the basis for any conversation in English. Additionally, when students talk about personal information is an even that promotes student-teacher classroom interaction and confidence and interpersonal communication within group.

Table 2. First cycle implementation

Session	Activity	Date
First Session	Introduction and application of the data collection instruments.	First week of September
Second Session	Draft of recording, design of the blog instrument	First week of September
Third Session	Creation of a blog	Second week of September
Fourth Session	Elaboration of the PPP (images, sequences,)	Second week of September
Fifth Session	Voice recording using students' personal information.	Third week of september
Sixth Session	Feedback to other pairs work (log).	Third week of September
Seventh Session	Application of data collection instruments (checklist, survey)	Fourth week of september

The second cycle was developed in four sessions; the topics were daily routine, through which students have the opportunity to create meanings by means of the description of their personal, academic and professional experience. Through Students' history the teacher has the opportunity of knowing better the students who might be motivated to express without many difficulties. Typical food is a part of students' life style that allows students chance to speak freely their likes and dislikes and costumes, and students can also get excited about health and nutrition. Considering futures plans is an important aspect to help students to think or construct their life project.

Table 3. Second cycle implementation

Session	Activity	Date
Eight session	Draft	First week of October
ninth session	Elaboration of images sequences	Second week of October
Tenth session	Voice recording about daily routines, Learner's history, typical food and future plans.	Second week of October
Eleventh session	Feedback to other pairs (log)	Third week of October

The third cycle was developed in 3 sessions. The students wrote and recorded a dialogue about daily routine, childhood anecdotes and injuries. Childhood anecdotes is an interesting topic in which students can express their emotions and feelings, key elements that influence their decisions in later life. Injuries are an inherent part of daily work of SENA students , that is why it is necessary that students use the foreign language to know the way to prevent and treat injuries.

Table 4. Third cycle implementation

Session	Activity	Date
Twelfth session	Draft of a dialogue	Third week of October
Thirteenth session	Elaboration of the images and sequences	Fourth week of October
Fourteenth session	Voice recording about injuries, daily routine and childhood anecdotes by means of dialogues.	Fourth week of October
Fifteen session	Feedback to other pairs	Fourth week of October
Sixteenth session	Application to the instruments (survey-checklist)	Fourth week of October

4.4 Conclusion

In order to conduct the research project, it was compulsory to state the vision of curriculum, language and learning, and develop an accurate approach for this pedagogical intervention. Based on these visions, the intervention and pedagogical implementation was planned, allowing the participants to develop the proposed activities bearing in mind the main constructs of socio-constructivist theory. That is to say, the participants developed their area of proximal development through peer feedback and the use of the audio blogs as a medium for substantiating their ideas. During the implementation, the data are collected as planned, by applying instruments such as a student's log, a survey and the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) .

Chapter 5: Results and Data Analysis

5.1 Introduction

Both the process and the study findings, discovered through the three stages of coding and the data analysis are presented in this chapter. It was necessary to find relationships between the different data collection procedures. They were grouped using color data for establishing the categories and constructs. After analyzing the data, the outcomes indicated a positive influence upon the decreasing of negative anxiety concerning the participants' spoken performance, as well as an improvement in the fluency of their speech.

5.2 Data management procedures

To start with, the data gathered in surveys, logs, URLs and recorders in the present study were purposely managed in order to document the participants' spoken abilities during the process. First, the data collected through the survey and the log were organized in physical folders according to each participant; in the same way, the participants wrote the URL of their audio blog in which their singular recordings were stored. Afterwards, all these four instruments were digitalized in four MS Excel matrixes, in order to compare and contrast the information and find patterns. Subsequently, all the participants were classified according to their age and school by using letters and numbers. To illustrate, the youngest participants from Ofelia Uribe de Acosta School were labeled as S1a, S2a, S3a; the students from Luis Angel Arango School were labeled as S1b, S2b, S3b and the oldest students from SENA- Industry and Services center were labeled as S1c, S2c and S3c in order to guarantee the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

5.2.1 Validation

In this research study, triangulation is implemented having in mind different methods that have been used to collect data. As Denzin (1978) states, triangulation is the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon in order to acknowledge the reliability existing between the matter of study and the impact on the population studied. Likewise, Campbell and Fiske (1959) claimed that it was necessary to use more than one method in the validation process with the purpose of ensuring that the variance reflected focuses on the trait and not on the method. Bearing in mind these ideas, the administration of the different instruments provided remarkable data which after being triangulated helped the researchers validate the findings. Thus, validity was made using the triangulation strategy consisting in the collection of information using the three designed instruments- the students log, the survey and the scale designed by Horwitz- in the development of the planned activities of eighteen participants six of each group, finding particular patterns. From this point, the different data resulted of each one of the three instruments were compared and contrasted which informed commonalities among the participants' outcomes. After considering the value of the data collected and having in mind the different perceptions concerning the influence of audioblogs in the level of anxiety presented in the instruments, categories emerged.

5.2.2 Data analysis methodology

For the purpose of analyzing the data in this research project, two approaches were applied: the coding techniques proposed by Corbin and Strauss (2008) in Grounded Theory and, the Patton's inductive analysis (1999). Considering these two methods to analyze the collected data, specifically, the latter approach informs this research proposal purposely; Patton (1999) claims the Inductive Analysis involves discovering patterns, themes and categories in one's data.

The term pattern usually refers to a descriptive finding. Those patterns emerge out of the data, through the analyst's interactions with the data. Additionally, qualitative analysis is typically inductive, especially when developing a codebook for content analysis or figuring out possible categories, patterns and themes. Similar to that, Grounded Theory is the approach followed to conduct the inductive development of the theory based on collected data; in that case, Strauss and Corbin (1990) state that grounded theory consists of reading and re-reading the collected data and identifying the categories and the relationship among them. Using this approach to analyze data requires certain abilities and competencies, one of these is pattern recognition, which, Boyatzis (1998) describes as the ability to see patterns in seemingly random information. All of these procedures were rigorously applied with all the data collected and will be described in the following lines.

5.3 Categories

5.3.1 Overall category mapping

Three systematic steps proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1990) -open, axial and selective coding- were used in order to find and identify the codes, the emerging categories and the core category.

This has been the most time consuming stage of the data analysis, considering that researchers have read, highlighted, grouped and reflected upon the collected data to discover the emerging categories that literally respond to the main objective of the research project. To reach this goal, we have implemented open, axial and selective coding techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In addition, the process the authors propose consist of labeling phenomena, discovering categories and naming categories.

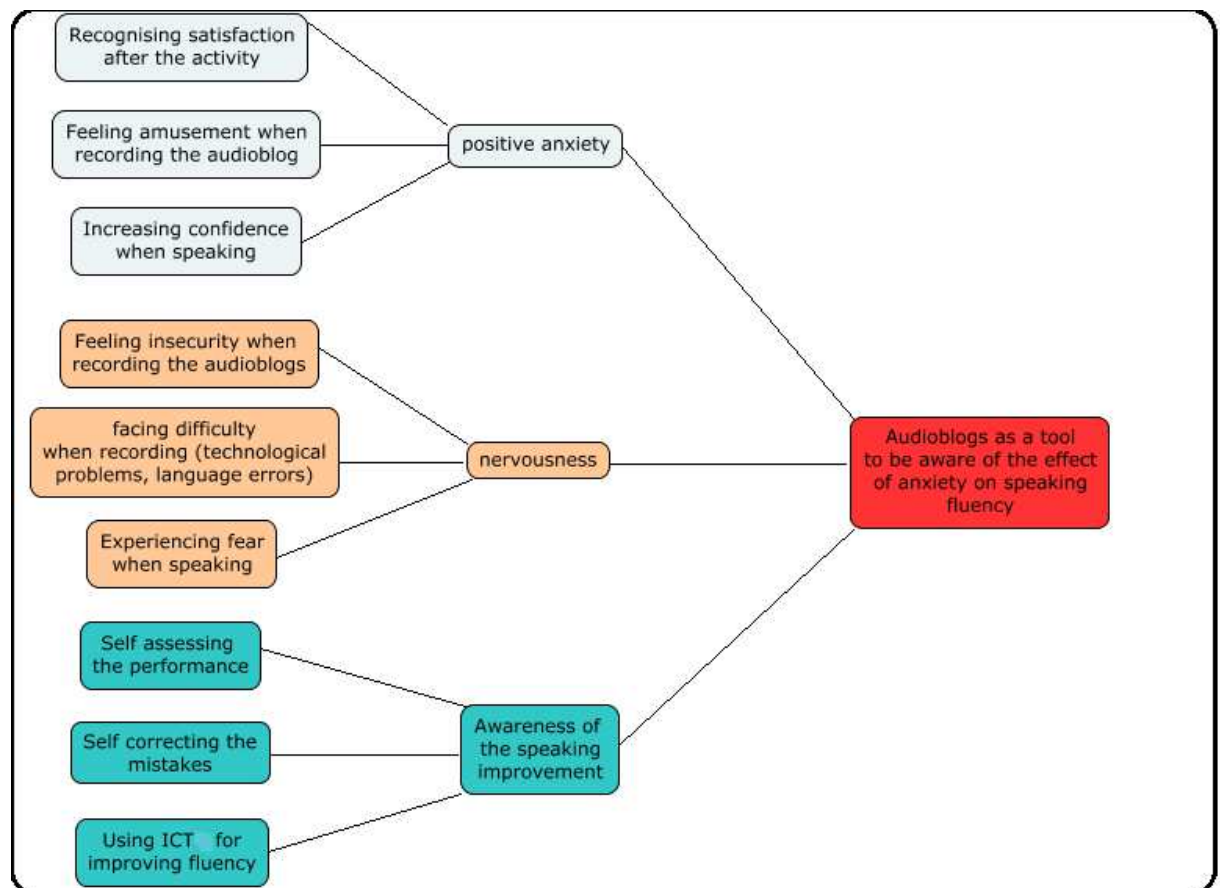
Taking into account these concepts and procedures, we have observed and reflected upon the phenomena to compare incidents that could be similar and that might be named in the same way; we have also discovered categories and we have named them considering the group of concepts. The initial codes that were identified through the process of color coding by analyzing all the instruments are the following shown below:

Table 5. Initial codes

How does the use of audio-blogs influence the speaking process students have in order to lower anxiety in spoken performance?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning• Amusement• Speaking improvement• Satisfaction• Self-awareness• Mistakes• ICT• Anxiety and nervousness• Relax• Scare• Insecurity• Security

Thus, in the axial coding stage, those codes were grouped bearing in mind their properties and the way they were related to each other. These key elements were examined, classified and contrasted after deeming their connections.

Figure 1. Preliminary categories and subcategories after the axial code procedure



5.3.2 Discussion of categories

The open axial coding procedure has yielded two main categories: *Increase of positive anxiety and decrease of negative anxiety*, in which the relation among positive and negative anxiety is presented; on the other side, the second category is *raising awareness of the learning process*, referred to self-assessment, fluency improvement and the use of related ICT.

5.3.2.1 Increase of positive anxiety and decrease of negative anxiety

Considering the findings of the pedagogical intervention, learners expressed they experienced anxiety in different situations related to the process of language learning, specifically when they used foreign language to communicate.

It could be said that the anxiety experienced by students was not a trait anxiety but rather a temporary one which leaves once the threatening situation is over. (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a; Spielberger & Vagg, 1995). Nevertheless, it may be closely related to trait type since anxiety rises during spoken performance and does not decrease when the situation finishes, that is what Horwitz et al. (1986) classified as situation-specific anxiety, because anxiety appears in target language speaking situations.

It was necessary to contemplate the type of anxiety students experienced to determine the impact that audio-blogs had on their spoken performance. In fact, most of the comments on the students' logs and the survey were related to the positive anxiety and not to the negative one, evidencing that learners experienced both of them during the pedagogical intervention, which for the purpose of the study brings great advantage.

In the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) quantitative analysis (Appendix E) it is evident the decreasing of anxiety in the third cycle since most learners chose the option 1 and 2 which corresponded to the lowest amount of anxiety in the questions related to communication apprehension-considered as the negative anxiety. It means there was a significant decreasing of anxiety when comparing cycles 1 and 3.

5.3.2.1.1 Positive Anxiety

The results indicated that most students experienced an increased positive anxiety every time they enjoyed performing a task as stated by Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) through the

generation and the enhancement of a friendly classroom atmosphere -the use of audioblogs to control the learning environment and the planned cycles-, it was possible to provide students with the tools for reducing negative anxiety and instead increasing positive anxiety in spoken performance.

This can be evidenced in the survey, in which participants answered these questions: *What positive aspects did you experience while doing the activity? What negative aspects did you experience while doing the activity? Which are related to what they experienced during the activity.*

“The recordings made me feel more relaxed”.(S1c)

“Las grabaciones me permitieron sentirme más tranquilo”. (S1c)

Excerpt 1. Survey. October 16th, 2014

“Negative: nothing. Positive: I felt better talking to the computer”.(S2a)

Negativos: nada; positivos: me senti mejor hablandole al computador (S2a)

Excerpt 2. Survey. November 4th, 2014

As further indicator, Kohel and Terrel (1991, cited in Horwitz, 2001: 118) found learners tend to be less anxious when they work in pairs or groups of three, rather than individually or in large groups. Specifically, this was evidenced during the third cycle, in which they worked in pairs and the positive anxiety was characterized by an increase, as it is made clear in the fluency category explanation above. Thus, the audioblogs benefited participants engaged in the activity and similarly, enjoy it by making them feel more relaxed and confident when performing orally. From this view, data provided in the student’s log, when answering the question: *What did I like about the activity?* Shows:

“I liked that I enjoyed doing the activity and on one occasion I laughed a lot” (S2a)

“Me gusto que me divertí haciendo la actividad y en una ocasión me reí mucho” (S2a)

Excerpt 3. Student’s Log. October 27th, 2014.

Another aspect that may have influenced the increase of positive anxiety is the repetition of the process during the three cycles; this was clearly stated when students answered the question: *Do you consider using audioblogs makes you less anxious when communicating in English? Why?*

“yes, because we can make several attempts and be happy with the result”.(S2c)

“si por que podemos tener varios intentos y quedar satisfechos”.(S2c)

Excerpt 4. Survey. October 16th, 2014.

According to O’Malley and Chamot (1990), the use of cognitive strategies such as the repetition of chunk language, phrases or language task and activities, reduces the negative anxiety and helps students to know about their strengths and weaknesses when developing the task and, as a result, perform it in a more efficient way. Most participants of the three groups used repetition as a cognitive strategy for building their speech, what fostered the reduction of the negative anxiety and the accurate reflection of their learning process as it is explained above.

5.3.2.1.2 Negative Anxiety

When analyzing the data provided by the audioblogs, the effect of negative anxiety in students’ speaking was evident. Considering the numerous silent pauses made by students in the first cycles. This type of anxiety raised the proportion of silent pauses causing disfluency in foreign language learners (Laukka et al., 2008). This is the reason why students felt fear and

insecurity when they had to record their voices in the target language and thinking about the idea of being graded while speaking.

Comparatively, this type of anxiety was evidenced in the students' log when answering the question: *How did you feel before doing the activity?*

“Anxious and nervous and embarrassed in front of my classmates” S5a

“Ansioso y nervioso y con pena de mis compañeros”

Excerpt 5. Students' log. October 29th, 2014

“I felt a little bit nervous” S5a

“Me sentí un poco nerviosa”

Excerpt 6. Students' log. October 29th, 2014

As previously mentioned, nervousness is strongly connected to negative anxiety since it promotes communication apprehension, namely, the avoidance of using target language in spoken performance (Horwitz, 2001). Pragmatically, the analysis of the third cycle showed the way students lowered this anxiety by means of the enjoyment of the activity,.

To this regard, Vadillo (1998) describes that when students are immersed in a second language learning activity that provide them enjoyment in a spontaneous and natural way, this environment makes them sharply think and react quickly without tension or fear, facilitating students' number of pauses reduction and, logically, increasing fluency.

5.3.2.2 *Raising Awareness of the Learning Process*

Bearing in mind the results of this study, students increased their awareness in the learning process focusing on three main aspects: fluency improvement, self-assessment and use of ICTs.

5.3.2.2.1 *Fluency improvement*

In order to analyze the impact of audio-blogs on students' speaking skills, it was necessary to choose pauses for being one of the most accurate and easiest ways to measure the levels of fluency improvement in students, taking into account the simplicity of the recordings. The chosen feature was fluency, and the used code was silent pauses, understood as the presence of silent intervals in speech (Esposito et Al, 2007). Among the different kind of pauses explained in chapter two, it was decided to use the split pauses, pauses which violate the phrase or clause boundaries (split pause groups) and defined in this research project as periods of two seconds of silence or more in 30 seconds of recording (Gorsuch, 2011). The analysis was stated by comparing the participants performance during the three cycles.

First cycle

After analyzing the split pauses, findings revealed that in the first cycle when participants of the three groups used some chunks of language in their recordings for talking about their learning experiences and personal information, their fluency was low due to it being the first recording and the level of negative anxiety being high as was stated earlier in this chapter.

Table 6. Split pauses in the first cycle

Group A		Group B		Group C	
Code	Pauses First Cycle	Code	Pauses First Cycle	Code	Pauses First Cycle
S1a	5	S1b	3	S1c	5
S2a	5	S2b	4	S2c	5
S3a	6	S3b	5	S3c	6
S4a	6	S4b	4	S4c	4
S5a	2	S5b	5	S5c	4
S6a	3	S6b	4	S6c	5

Second cycle

Once the second cycle was run, participants' performance showed significant progress in their fluency granted by the reduced number of pauses to almost half the quantity of pauses in their speech. According to Kellem (2009), the chosen topic had a positive effect on the increase of fluency, bearing in mind "the more familiar and personally relevant a topic is, the easier it is to talk about" (p. 10).

Even though in Group B and C split pauses were not significantly reduced, it was evident they felt more comfortable when speaking because they could use some communication strategies. In Faerch and Kasper's words (1983), these strategies are "potentially conscious plans for solving what to individuals present themselves as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal" (p.58). Correspondingly, Dörnyei (1995) claims that the use of avoidance

and compensatory strategies help learners decrease affective factors and keep talking, for instance, learners in group 2 used only compensatory strategies such as fillers or hesitation devices to short pauses and have more time for expressing what they intended to communicate.

Table 7. Split pauses in the second cycle

Group A		Group B		Group C	
Code	Pauses Second Cycle	Code	Pauses Second Cycle	Code	Pauses Second Cycle
S1a	2	S1b	2	S1c	4
S2a	3	S2b	2	S2c	2
S3a	3	S3b	4	S3c	4
S4a	6	S4b	3	S4c	4
S5a	3	S5b	3	S5c	2
S6a	2	S6b	2	S6c	4

Third cycle

In the third cycle, the students worked in pairs doing a dialogue about their likes and dislikes, personal information and injuries at the workplace. Taking into account cycle 1 and cycle 2 the students from group A and B significantly diminished the split pauses to one, two or three. Even though the participants from Group B evidenced minor decrease of split pauses, it was evident their progress in lowering anxiety. Kellem (2009) states that “when students get used to recording their conversations, they gradually feel more relaxed, and the task becomes easier to complete” (p. 10). Besides, it was found that working in pairs may help to diminish the level of anxiety and increase the fluency in the oral performance, and according to Young (1999) pairs and small groups could contribute to lowering negative anxiety in a classroom situation, bearing in mind this learning environment gives the students opportunities for supporting,

encouraging and praising each other. As a conclusion, it was stated a relation among the level of anxiety and the number of pauses considering that pauses decreased when anxiety decreased and viceversa.

Table 8. Split pauses in the third cycle

Group A		Group B		Group C	
Code	Pauses Third Cycle	Code	Pauses Third Cycle	Code	Pauses Third Cycle
S1a	0	S1b	2	S1c	2
S2a	1	S2b	1	S2c	2
S3a	1	S3b	2	S3c	3
S4a	1	S4b	3	S4c	1
S5a	3	S5b	2	S5c	2
S6a	3	S6b	2	S6c	1

5.3.2.2.2 *Self assessment*

The results also showed that learners started the process of development of skills to self-assess their performance in the target language, especially, after comparing the three groups of participants; this was more evident students of group B and C. This might be highly related to the age factor since they have had more opportunities to self-assess their performance during the language learning process, getting to know their learning styles and needs; whilst group A students focused on their intrinsic motivation, defined by Ryan and Deci (2000) as the enjoyment of the engaged task or a sense of fulfillment an individual acquires from engaging something.

These excerpts confirm the students' constant desire to assess their speaking performance and improve their spoken performance by means of audioblogs:

"I realized it is still difficult for me to talk English fluently, but I will try to improve this"
"Me di cuenta de que aún se me dificulta hablar inglés de manera fluida pero intentaré mejorar esto"

Excerpt 7, Students' log, September 22nd, 2014

"... I am missing to pronounce some words correctly"
"... aún me falta pronunciar bien algunas palabras"

Excerpt 8, Survey, November 11th, 2014

5.3.2.2.3 Use of ICT

The results pointed out that some students witnessed problems when converting the recording to mp3 file, uploading it to a podcast and then uploading that podcast to the blog, which may have caused the high level of negative anxiety at the beginning of the process. Nevertheless, the problem was overcome due to the constant repetition of the steps. Some other students had no problems using technology; taking into consideration they had enough computer skills for developing the task without any constraint.

Group A

At the beginning of the first cycle the participants of group A had some problems in the process mentioned above, bearing in mind they did not have the necessary computer literacy and in some cases, it was the first time they had access to a computer, as shown in the answer provided to the question: *What did you not like about the activity?*

“we have to do lots of things to upload (the recording) to the blog” (S6a)

“que tocaba hacer muchas cosas para subir al blog” (S6a)

Excerpt 9, Student’s log. September 22nd, 2014

Nevertheless, according to Norazah and Norbayah (2011), if the user experiences enjoyment through the adoption of new technology, the attitude towards this new technology will affect the learning process positively. Thus, the participants of this group also emphasized that the use of technology was one aspect they enjoyed, because of two basic reasons, due to their lack of experience with computers and the headphones and, their enrollment in this process as it was new to them. Reasons marked when answering to the question: *What did I like about the activity?*

“recording with headphones and be able to listen (to the recordings)” S5a

“grabar con audífonos y poder escucharla (la grabación)” S5a

Excerpt 10, Student’s log. September 22nd, 2014

In the third cycle, most participants overcame this situation, since they had already been exposed to the process, knew it and also because they had practiced it during the three cycles. This is evidenced when students answered to the question: *What is your opinion about the use of audioblogs?*

“it helps us to improve the English level but at the beginning I did not understand anything” S6a

“le ayuda a uno a mejorar el nivel de inglés pero al principio no entendía” S6a

Excerpt 11. Survey. November 4th, 2014.

This knowledge about the process may have increased the level of positive anxiety in these participants, due to the students' tendency to be more motivated to repeat an enjoyable activity than repeating a not enjoyable one (Norazah & Norbayah, 2011). In this specific case, the participants' amusement helped to repeat the activity, learn from it and increase the positive anxiety, efficiently.

Groups B and C

In contrast, participants of groups B and C, showed proper knowledge skills when doing the audioblog. Expressly, they asserted technology allowed them to practice and improve their English level in a more didactic and meaningful way, as was stated in the answers to the questions: *What is your opinion about the use of audioblogs?* And *What did you like about the activity?* Respectively:

“It seems to me that it is better since through the practice people learn more and the audioblogs are a good way” (Sb3)

“me parece que es mejor ya que mediante la práctica se aprende más y los audioblogs son una buena manera” (S3b)

Excerpt 12, Survey. November 13th, 2014

“the dynamic was different to others, mostly the motivation to learn English· (S2c)

“la dinámica que fue diferente a lo demas, sobre todo lo motivador que es que le den ganas de aprender inglés” (s2c)

Excerpt 13. Students' log, December 12th, 2014

In this aspect, Wang and Liao (2011) stated that ICT in teaching increase the motivation, raising their receptive skills, such as, efficiency and autonomy. With group B and C, it is evident the participants were more motivated and autonomous, developing the different recordings without any problem, because of the upper level of computer skills they have developed in a more remarkable way in comparison with the participants of group A , according to the results of the student log and survey.

Other Findings

In addition to the findings mentioned above, other findings related to metacognitive regulation strategies were found. In this specific case, the metacognitive regulation helped students to actively control their cognitive process by being engaged in their learning (Livingston, 1997). In actuality, it was evidenced when the participants started to reflect upon the implications of using audioblogs in their learning process when answering the question: *Do you feel you have improved your English level? Why?*

“Because when implementing often the technological tools as recordings the speaking is more fluent each time ” (S6b)

“Porque al implementar los aparatos tecnológicos como grabaciones seguido el speaking cada vez es más fluido” (s2c)

Excerpt 14. Students survey, December 12th, 2014

Learners showed they could take advantage of audioblogs for learning purposes with the use of some metacognitive regulation strategies as: the planning of the main ideas they developed in their audioblogs, the monitoring of the comprehension of their own speech and

their peers' speech, the evaluation of their progress through the different cycles using the students' log and the pair work strategy for scaffolding their learning process. This process was evident when participants answered the question: *What is your opinion about the activity?*

"It helped me to evaluate myself, listen to me and acknowledge whether I have improved (s2a)

"(me ayudo a) evaluarme, escucharme y considerar si he mejorado" (s2a)

Excerpt 15. Students survey, December 12th, 2014

5.3.3 Core category

After data analysis and reduction by means of coding techniques, the main category identified in this research study is: ***Increase of positive anxiety in oral fluency after raising awareness in learning.***

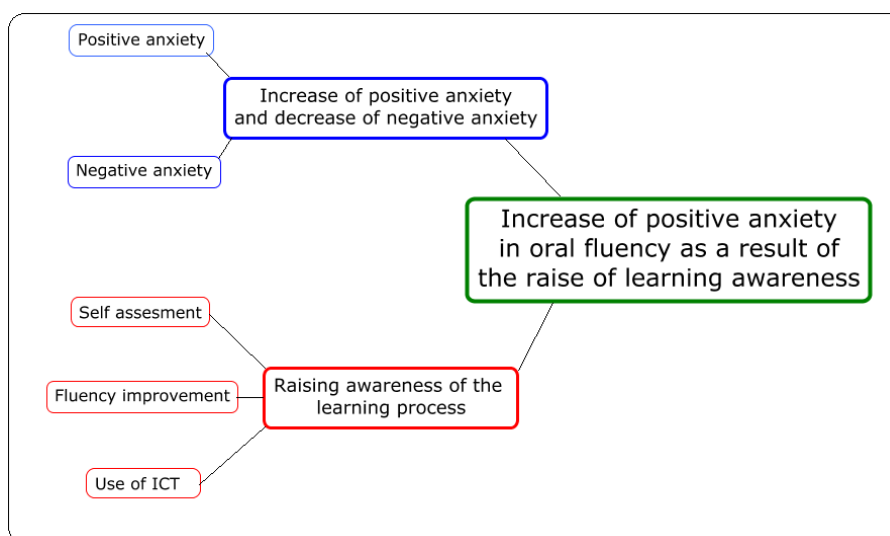
Using audioblogs to lower anxiety in spoken performance displayed development of two main categories ***Increase of positive anxiety and decrease of negative anxiety*** in which positive anxiety and negative anxiety were analyzed; the second category was ***raising awareness of the learning process*** such as self-assessment, fluency improvement and use of ICT.

Lowering negative anxiety was possible because of the use of audio blogs, thus positive anxiety was increased by establishing a non-threatening environment (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009) that allowed students to enjoy the activity and reflect upon their learning process. On the other hand, negative anxiety increased students' feelings of worry and doubt in the performance of the task (Oxford, 2002), affecting some physiological processes such as their oral performance and self-image, because those students initially showed a considerable number of pauses and hesitations when speaking in L2.

The implementation of audioblogs as a learning facilitator and the repetition of the task (Kellem, 2009) which along with the pair grouping (Young, 1999), empowered learners with accurate oral fluency and language skills. In brief, it was, audioblogs which was the tool that contributed to decrease negative anxiety and increase pupils' positive anxiety, reinforcing their oral fluency and raising learning awareness to find and implement precise strategies to overcome affective and cognitive difficulties, and enrich their self-assessment procedures. The way students got actively involved was helpful for facilitating anxiety management and, actually have a positive impact on their oral fluency in the learning of a foreign language (Scovel, 1978). Accounting for this purpose, both the study and participants overtly acknowledged audioblogs as the way to encourage learners to have higher language proficiency and profit from positive anxiety in favor of their fluency. This type of anxiety in truth, increases self-confidence and has learners seeking strategies to overcome language difficulties (Oxford, 2002)

Thanks to the use of audio-blogs, students were also engaged in the process despite the occasional setbacks, obstacles and major challenges. Their answers reflected their awareness of their active role in the learning process and their ability to learn and succeed during it. They also expressed with great pleasure their motivation and willingness regarding the learning process after having experience in didactic activities and media such as audio-blogs to practice the target language as a key component of their context and, as a means of communication of great impact for their performance and higher level language acquisition. To this respect, the profits are also related to fluency and self-confidence when expressing themselves orally, with less amounts of anxiety. Concisely, their curiosity, fed with constant optimism, willingness and great effort to the using of technology and ICT offered them notable skills to lead their own learning.

Figure 2. Final categories and subcategories after the selective code procedure.



5.4 Conclusion

The results of this research project have shown that audioblogs are an effective tool to lower negative anxiety and increase positive anxiety in learners' spoken performance while raising awareness in their learning process. It was noticeable the positive effect of audioblogs on students' language learning process, on the one hand audioblogs helped learners of the three groups to decrease negative anxiety and increase the positive one. Therefore, learners who experienced negative anxiety avoided using target language in communicative situations, nonetheless, when they used this tool they turned their negative anxiety into positive and successfully, increased the use of target language in speaking tasks; this improvement was evident in the reduction of silent and split pauses in the recordings. On the other hand, students were aware of the improvements they did after using audioblogs, due to the fact; this tool helped them to discover they actually improved in pronunciation and fluency. Additionally, they realized audioblogs were an outstanding strategy to learn and develop intrinsic motivation. Regarding the differences, students from groups B and C were more motivated and autonomous than group one, this because of their skills using ICT.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

6.1 Introduction

This chapter shows the conclusions originated from a research study carried out at three different public institutions, in which the researchers found out that thanks to the use of audioblogs, students increased positive anxiety and decreased negative anxiety in spoken performance as well as improved their oral fluency by reducing the number of split pauses. Considering these results, the present study has been compared and contrasted with previous research projects with the purpose of enriching them with relevant literature and analyze its possible applicability in the EFL Colombian situation.

6.2 Comparison of results with previous studies' results

Through the use of audioblogs participants displayed positive changes in two main aspects: First, learners decreased the levels of negative anxiety which affected their oral performance in L2 by making numerous pauses; Second, learners improved their oral fluency when the affective filter was lowered and students experienced high levels of positive anxiety, as well as being aware of their learning process by self-assessing their spoken performance and using ICT as meaningful tools to improve target language skills. These findings support previous research studies in which audioblogs were used as artifacts to improve speaking skills and decrease affective factors that impede the successful process of L2 learning. Appel and Borges (2012) found that the implementation of oral tasks with audioblogs, helped learners improve their oral production skills, speaking and listening, and contributed to increase the learners' level of comfortability when using the target language, similar to the results of the present

research study, in which the students felt less anxious using audioblogs, improving their oral fluency and being aware of the learning process they went through.

In regards to the decreasing of speaking anxiety, Siyli and Kafes (2015) used audio journals - with the same purpose audioblogs were used in this proposal- This experience helped learners to overcome speaking anxiety, which impedes the use of target language in communicative situations (Horwitz, 2001). Furthermore, participants gained self-confidence and enjoyment when speaking in the target language. There are many similarities in the results of this study, since both artifacts-audioblogs and audio journals-assisted learners to overcome the speaking anxiety that affected their oral performance and increased the positive anxiety, which eventually promotes self-confidence, enjoyment and improvement of speaking skills alike to Horwitz's results.

Similarly, Ibrahim and Mat Daud (2013) conducted studies finding podcasts had a positive effect on the decreasing of anxiety and improving speaking skills; as audioblogs, podcasting provides students with the opportunity of conversational interaction and feedback with individuals and groups (Boyd, 2003). The final results evidenced a reduction in the level of anxiety in most of the participants and that podcasts can be used as a teaching aid in teaching public speaking skills to provide an authentic environment for practice.

In the study carried out by Huann and Thong (2006) the use of audioblogs enhanced the development of picture conversation skills in Chinese language. In fact, this study showed that by providing students with an audioblogging environment as well as a platform, requesting comments and giving feedback of performances, there was an improvement in the participants' abilities in conversations. Both studies showed the same results we found in our research study, first, voice recording tools helped learners to focus on their speaking skills and, as result

improved them; and second, learners felt less anxious using these tools because they could give and receive feedback.

Podcasting and other voice recording tools have been used to analyze the improvement of oral performance, especially pronunciation and fluency, and the development of learning awareness; for instance Ducate and Lomicka (2009) analyzed the contribution of extemporaneous podcasts to improve pronunciation, whose results evidenced a significant progress in pronunciation, the development of creativity and the comfortability students experienced after the implementation stage. These results are closely related to our study results, first, because learners had the opportunity to record and listen to their voices overcoming their language drawbacks in pronunciation and fluency; second, students developed creativity and increased learning awareness-important aspects to enhance language skills-and finally students changed their perceptions towards target language positively.

Likewise, Mancera (2014) found that self-recordings contributed to the enhancement of pronunciation difficulties in students who constantly made language errors. This artifact influenced the advancement of self-monitoring ability to identify the mistakes learners made in pronunciation, and in that way to correct them. These study results coincide with our findings because the artifact helped learners to develop metacognitive abilities as self-monitoring and self-assessment to improve oral skills, in this case pronunciation and fluency.

Likewise, Lemos (2010) used radio shows to reduce anxiety and improve participants' speaking skills; the results of this study showed that students were capable of raising learning awareness and reducing anxiety level by profiting a healthy environment. In spite of using a different tool, Lemos' proposal results are similar in the way the artifact created an appropriate learning environment to decrease anxiety enhancing oral skills and rise learning awareness.

6.3 Significance of the results

Taking into consideration the contribution of the audioblogs in the ELT environment, the use of ICTs should be included in the syllabi of foreign and second language programs considering that technology plays an important role in students' skills, motivation and knowledge (Grabe & Grabe, 2007). Moreover, audioblogs and podcasting promote language learning (Fitze, 2006) by allowing learners to provide and receive feedback, feel more comfortable when using the target language and improve speaking skills. It is evident the need to decrease negative anxiety because it affects learners spoken performance since they remain silent, reserved and inhibited and avoid participating in speaking activities (Ely, 1986). The present study clarifies how audioblogs can be applied to lower negative anxiety and raise positive anxiety to improve oral fluency.

In terms of national perspective, from the Colombian national language policies established by MEN (2006) foreign language learners must be provided with the appropriate tools to develop their linguistic competence-the ability to communicate using Foreign Language in different situations-and anxiety, amongst other factors, might become an impediment to achieve this goal. To this respect, anxiety has a strong effect on productive language skills (Scovel, 1978; Cope, 1986; McIntyre and Gardner, 1991; Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2001; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009) since it does not allow learners to achieve learning outcomes; bearing this in mind, the implementation of audioblogs is an effective strategy to be applied in public and private institutions to overcome affective factors and improve oral skills, as well as creating social nets to provide and receive feedback on their oral productions and promote sociolinguistic competence.

The results of this study give insights to the international ELT community about the way the negative anxiety affects the oral performance when learning a foreign language, anxiety causes fear, apprehension and concern associated with the perception or anticipation of negative events in the context of learning a second language (Wang, 2005); additionally it offers the process of identification of the type of anxiety and how it affects speaking skills, the implementation of audioblogs to lower anxiety and improve oral fluency and the way learners raise learning awareness by self-assessing their oral performance with the use of ICTs. Hence, the ELT community might consider the use of strategies, other tools and topics to promote the use and improvement of the target language skills when using audioblogs and include them in syllabi and periodical planning.

6.4 Limitations of the present study

Although the research has reached its aims, there were certain noticeable limitations in the implementation of this process. First, this study was conducted with a simple random sampling because of the time limit. Therefore, to generalize the results for larger groups, the study should have been done in a longer time and involved more participants at different levels to provide better evidence the effectiveness of audioblogging. Second, implementing the approach in a group of students using and without using audioblogs would have been an enriching experience that would have allowed to compare both situations and give stronger support to the research study.

Another limitation was the application of the instruments, which were only applied at the beginning and at the end of the process. It would have been meaningful to apply the instruments in the middle of the process, too; this with the purpose of analyzing and comparing the data

collected in three different stages. For upcoming research studies, this strategy might provide researchers with more significant information and different results and enrich the existing research studies on the decreasing of anxiety and use of audioblogs.

Finally, the learners' lack of computer literacy affected the original timetable researchers designed for the implementation of this project. To this situation, Becta (2004) asserts that learners need to be trained before being exposed to the technological tools and the effectiveness of ICT training depend on some components: time for training, pedagogical training, skills training and an ICT use in the initial teacher training. Having that information in mind, it was necessary to train learners to use the audioblogs and voice recording tools, this long time could have been used to analyze other linguistic aspects students possibly improved as pronunciation.

6.5 Further research

This study demonstrated that audioblogs were a useful tool not only in increasing positive anxiety and decreasing negative anxiety in spoken performance but also to raise students' awareness of the learning process and improve their speech fluency. Moreover, it would have been very interesting to determine the effects of audioblogs in the improvement of pronunciation skills in young adults and adults. This could be achieved with the aid of mobile phones, common and accessible technological devices that would allow students to record, listen, evaluate and correct their oral performance. It is recommended to implement a similar research study in which the improvement of pronunciation can be analyzed in similar age patterns and characteristics of participants by using audioblogs or mobile phones.

Further studies may also examine the relationship between audioblogs and goal-settings since these artifacts could help to monitor and record the progress of language students in achieving

their learning objectives. Another factor worth considering is the study of audioblogs as a tool to reinforce metacognitive regulation strategies such as how to approach a given learning task, monitoring comprehension and evaluating progress (Livingston, 1997), important procedures for successful learning. To have wider insights of the study, it would be meaningful to conduct a study to determine the contribution of audioblogs in the development of metacognitive regulation strategies and the differences in teenagers and young adults, additionally it is suggested to consider the influence of audioblogs on other affective factors as motivation and self-esteem.

6.6 Conclusion

Considering that EFL learners need to communicate in the target language to express their thoughts, make questions and interact with other people, and anxiety might discourage learners to achieve this goal, audioblogs become the most suitable tool to overcome this negative affective factor. In the present study, learners were assigned to do some speaking tasks they could not complete successfully because they avoided using target language due to high levels of anxiety making high number of pauses. These needs encouraged researchers to develop speaking tasks with the support of audioblogs in three different cycles, including pre, during and post stages to give input, develop the voice recording activity and assess the learners' oral performance. The results of this study showed that learners lowered negative anxiety and increased positive anxiety, using target language more constantly and improving their oral fluency, in the same way they managed to raise learning awareness reflecting upon the assessment of their oral production and considering audioblogs as outstanding tools to learn and enhance language skills.

To conclude, this research study lays out the importance of including innovative and meaningful ICT to improve learners' oral skills. Furthermore, this research project highlights the importance of helping learners to overcome negative anxiety effects, to this purpose teachers must support learners' oral skills development and improvement by using audioblogs, which is an easy and affordable tool to record, listen and improve their speaking tasks while giving and receiving feedback and rising learning awareness on their learning process.

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Appendix A: Consent letters

Bogotá, Septiembre 08 de 2013

Señor
Luis Mario Lanza
COLEGIO OFELIA URIBE DE ACOSTA IED
La Ciudad

Referencia: Solicitud de permiso para aplicar instrumentos e implementación pedagógica con los estudiantes de grado séptimo

Cordial Saludo,

Actualmente estoy cursando primer semestre en el programa de Maestría en Enseñanza del inglés con Énfasis en Ambientes de Aprendizaje Autónomo en la Universidad de La Sabana. Teniendo en cuenta que me encuentro adelantando un proyecto de investigación titulado: “Use of audioblogs to lower anxiety in spoken performance” el cual tiene como objetivo principal describir el posible impacto de los audioblogs en disminuir la ansiedad que produce en los estudiantes el hablar en inglés. La participación de los estudiantes no es obligatoria, por tal razón los estudiantes participarán libremente y podrán retirarse en el momento que consideren pertinente. Las actividades a desarrollar no serán tenidas en cuenta para asignarles notas. La identificación de los estudiantes será confidencial, se utilizarán seudónimos o códigos con el fin de proteger la integridad de los estudiantes.

Por tal razón es necesario aplicar instrumentos de investigación (cuestionario, registro del estudiante, grupo focal, autoevaluación y the foreign language classroom anxiety scale) Dichos instrumentos serán aplicados a los estudiantes para determinar sus necesidades específicas y determinar el nivel de ansiedad que experimentan al comunicarse en inglés. Estos se aplicarán durante dos meses, comprendiendo parte de los meses de septiembre, octubre y noviembre de 2014. Adicional a dichos instrumentos, es necesario desarrollar la implementación pedagógica en sesiones que comprenden 24 horas, con talleres y actividades en inglés, por lo que es necesario el uso de computadores con acceso a internet y diademas; dicha implementación pedagógica está programada para hacerse en 5 semanas (desde el 15 de septiembre al 30 de Noviembre de 2014); considerando lo anteriormente establecido, solicito a ustedes el permiso para llevar a cabo dicho proyecto y también el acceso a los recursos necesarios para este.

Agradezco su atención prestada y quedo atento a cualquier comunicación.

Atentamente

Laura Sofía Pineda Bautista
C.C. 1.014.185.341 de Bogotá.

Bogotá D.C. 28 de Octubre de 2013

Señor

Padre de familia

Estudiante curso 701

Reciba un cordial saludo,

De manera atenta pido a usted su autorización para llevar a cabo una serie de actividades dirigidas a los estudiantes de grado séptimo en la jornada de la tarde, en desarrollo del proyecto de investigación de la maestría en didáctica del inglés con énfasis en ambientes de aprendizaje autónomo de la universidad de la sabana, la cual estoy cursando actualmente.

Para el desarrollo del presente proyecto es necesario poder analizar los productos que los estudiantes elaboren, como la creación de audio-blogs y escritos. Además, las actividades a realizar serán monitoreadas, grabadas y transcritas, por lo cual se garantiza estricta confidencialidad sobre las identidades de los estudiantes participantes y los posibles resultados que la investigación pueda arrojar.

La implementación del proyecto tendrá una duración de un año y medio. Las actividades desarrolladas no tendrán incidencia de ningún tipo en el rendimiento académico del estudiante.

Agradezco su colaboración,

Laura Sofía Pineda Bautista

Yo _____ acudiente del estudiante
_____ del curso 701 ____ autorizo ____ no autorizo al
estudiante a participar en el proyecto de investigación *the use of audio-blogs to lower anxiety in spoken performance*, desarrollado en el Colegio Ofelia Uribe de Acosta J.t. el presente año.

Appendix B: Needs analysis instruments**ENCUESTA A ESTUDIANTES**

- 1- ¿Te gustaría aprender a hablar inglés? Si_____ NO_____¿Por qué?_____
- 2- ¿Sientes vergüenza o temor a hablar en español? ¿Por qué?

- 3- ¿Cómo te sentirías si empezaras a hablar inglés? ¿por qué?

- 4- ¿En qué temas te gustaría enfatizar?

- 5- ¿Has realizado actividades donde hablen inglés? ¿En qué lugar?

- 6- ¿Ha usado computadores? ¿Con que fin?

- 7- ¿Ha usado blogs, audioblogs o podcasts para aprender o mejorar una lengua o con objetivos académicos?

- 8- ¿Se conecta a internet? Si lo hace ¿desde que lugar se conecta?

- 9- ¿Tiene alguna sugerencia para tener en cuenta al inicio del próximo año relacionada con la clase de inglés?

Focus group questions

1. ¿Le gustaría aprender a hablar inglés?
2. ¿Por qué razón?
3. ¿Siente temor al pensar en la idea de empezar a hablar inglés?
4. ¿Por qué razón?
5. ¿Qué problemas se podrían presentar en ese proceso?
6. ¿Sobre qué temas les gustaría hablar?
7. ¿Por qué temas le gustaría empezar y por cuáles no?
8. ¿Ha usado computadores? ¿Ha usado blogs, audioblogs o podcast con fines educativos?

Appendix C: Survey

¿Considera importante comunicarse en inglés?

2. ¿Cuál es su opinión sobre el uso de audio blogs?

3. ¿Siente que ha mejorado su nivel de inglés con el uso de audio blogs?

4. ¿Qué aspectos mejoraría en cuanto al uso de audio blogs para incrementar su habilidad comunicativa en inglés?

5. ¿Considera que con el uso de audio blogs se siente menos ansioso al momento de comunicarse en inglés?

6. ¿Considera que con el uso de audio blogs se siente más ansioso al momento de comunicarse en inglés?

7. ¿Considera que tiene suficiente conocimiento para expresarse en inglés (hablar de sí mismo, de la familia y del entorno próximo a usted)? Si ___ no ___ ¿Por qué?

8. ¿Qué sintió al escuchar su grabación en el blog?

9. De acuerdo a lo experimentado durante la actividad, ¿Qué aspectos negativos encontró al realizar la actividad?

10. De acuerdo a lo experimentado durante la actividad positivos encontró al realizar la actividad?

Appendix D: Learning log



FECHA	¿Qué se hizo?	¿Quién estaba ahí?	¿Cómo me sentí durante la actividad?	¿Cómo me sentí haciendo la actividad?	¿Cómo me sentí al terminar la actividad?	¿Qué me gustó de la actividad?	¿Qué no me gustó de la actividad?

Appendix E: Audioblogs

my audioblog

martes, 28 de octubre de 2014


Our Conversation



Publicado por [estefyarias urrego lamprea](#) en 13:26 1 comentario:

[M](#) [B](#) [f](#) [p](#) [g+](#) Recomendar esto en Google

Datos personales



[estefyarias urrego lamprea](#)

[Seguir](#) 0

[Ver todo mi perfil](#)

Archivo del blog

- ▼ 2014 (5)
 - ▼ octubre (3)
 - [Our Conversation](#)
 - [My Most Important Experience](#)
 - [my most important experience](#)
 - septiembre (2)

Audioblogs transcriptions

Code	Link	Transcription first cycle	Transcription second cycle	Transcription third cycle.
S1a	http://laurayhelen02.blogspot.com/	When I was// five years old I estudy prescul at school ofelia uribe de acosta, next I estudy primary when I was six years old / at school Ofelia Uribe de Acosta. Next estudy secondary when I was // twelve years old at school ofelia uribe de acosta. My teacher of preimary // was patricia, next of study primary my teacher of secundary ei francis...	When I started five grade I estarted to distinguish a girl name helen mateus // we found for the positions because we were / good estudents. then the time pass // we were knowing each other and know we are the best friends foreveeer.	S1a: Hello S2a: hello S1a: what is your name? S2a: my name is Helen, and yours? S1a: my name is laura, how old are you? S2a: I am thirteen years old, and yours? S1a: I am twelve years old. S2a: w // where do you live? S1a: I live in bellavista and you?
S2a	http://laurayhelen02.blogspot.com/	When // I was seven years old I estudy /// primery at school prospero pinzon. next I studid primary //// when I was seven years old at school prospero pinzon. Next studid second when I was twelve yeats old at school ofelia uribede acosta. My teacher of primery was	When I / stadiid five grade // I stated to distinguish // a girl name laura ariza. We found for the position becose we were wo students/// Tttt... then time pass / we were knowing each other and now we are	S2a: I live in san felipe. Where is your favorite food? S1a: my favorite food is pizza and you? S2a: my favorite food is hamburguer S1a: what is your favorite Tv show? S2a: my favorite tv show is

		geraldine. Next of studid // primery my teacher of second is francisco.	the best friends forever.	pocoyo /// and yours? S1a: / I love / the olsen S2a: what is your favorite music? S1a: my favorite music is reggae and yours? S2a: I love / taalso /// What is your favorite color? S1a: My favorite color is fucsia and green and you? S2a: My favorite color is black, gray and blug S1a: bye S2a: byeeeeee
--	--	---	---------------------------------	---

Code	Link	Transcriptio n first cycle	Transcriptio n second cycle	Transcriptio n third cycle.
S1b	http://mediaflaamiguelzapata.blogspot.com/	Hello my name is Miguel Zapata ehh/ I have sixteen years old,// uhmm I like the music, ehh //probably in the future/ I think that I'll study in /outside this country// eh I think in the future// I will study some engineer// uhmm system engineer and // ehh I don't know// eh probably in the future// I will study// very some much and I would like in the future this is possible.	A trip to Colombia: In my country the traditional local dish is Ajiaco, but I think that the beans will be most delicious// and anything for dessert I'll talk I recommend Gelatin// and by the drinks would be fruits/ fruit juice// or lemonade	S1. Good morning! S2: That is why your visit? S1: Oh, come to tell me my future! S2: Find the right place, sits S1: Thank you! S2: start// You will be married with Justin. S1: really? Oh my God! S2: Uhmmm, you will work in the New York Times! S1: Really? It's my dream, I will have children? S2: Yes, you will have three children S1: Oh, thank you, I will dance S2: Thanks for you,
S2b	http://luzramonmendoza.blogspot.com/	Hi, my name is Luz Adriana Ramon, I study in Luis Angel Arang/ I am sixteen years old, I	Hi my name is Luz Adriana Ramón, I talk to you/ about food and drink in my region, in my	

		<p>will be journalist, writer and I like/ or I like will be teacher of history, //uhmm my my favorite singer is Justin Bieber and my favorite band is one direction, eh I like the English I want// live in another country/uhm m South Korea, Japan, London, Canada and more ///ehh I like the anime I have no no I will have seven dogs//ehhh I like the anime and // thank you see you later</p>	<p>region the traditional food is Mote, is delicious is cooked with vegetables and meat if you can go Norte de Santander I recommend you the sancocho, uhmmm. The traditional drink is the fruit drink and for dessert you can eat arepa, it's a little bizarre you can't/ drink tap water, it's horrible. Thank you Luz Adriana Ramón Mendoza, Norte de Santander, Byyye</p>	<p>thanks for your visit! See you later S1: bye S2: Bye</p>
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Appendix F: Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale- FLCAS

Cordial saludo apreciado estudiante,

El presente documento es un test denominado “Escala de Ansiedad en un Aula de Clases” (sus siglas en inglés FLCAS) que consta de 33 items, es una versión en español adaptada del original creado por Elaine Horwitz (1986) y tiene por objeto recolectar información sobre las dificultades comunicativas y los sentimientos que usted experimenta cuando debe interactuar en forma oral en el idioma inglés.

La información suministrada a través del presente documento será utilizada para el desarrollo del trabajo de investigación titulado “**Use of Audio-Blogs to lower anxiety in spoken performance**”. Por favor escoja el enunciado con el cual usted se sienta más identificado, representados por una escala de números de 1 a 5 (como se indica en las instrucciones). El diligenciamiento de este documento no es calificable, ya que no existen respuestas correctas o incorrectas pero se solicita total sinceridad. El equipo investigador asegura completo anonimato en la información recolectada.

Agradecemos de antemano su valiosa colaboración.

1. INFORMACIÓN PERSONAL																			
Ciudad y Fecha de Aplicación:																			
Nombres y Apellidos:																			
Edad:																			
2. INSTRUCCIONES																			
<p>Las siguientes afirmaciones se refieren a diversas situaciones frecuentes en el aprendizaje de un idioma. Su tarea consiste en valorar cada una de ellas dependiendo de su grado de acuerdo o desacuerdo en cada una de las siguientes afirmaciones, utilizando para ello la siguiente escala.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Estoy totalmente de acuerdo</td> <td>2</td> <td>Estoy de acuerdo</td> <td>3</td> <td>No sé</td> <td>4</td> <td>No estoy de acuerdo</td> <td>5</td> <td>Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo.</td> </tr> </table>										1	Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	2	Estoy de acuerdo	3	No sé	4	No estoy de acuerdo	5	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo.
1	Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	2	Estoy de acuerdo	3	No sé	4	No estoy de acuerdo	5	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo.										
*Encierre con un círculo la opción con la que más se sienta identificado.																			
3. APLICACIÓN DEL TEST																			

1.- Nunca estoy completamente seguro de mi mismo cuando hablo en la clase de inglés	1	2	3	4	5
2.- No me preocupa cometer errores cuando hablo en la clase de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
3.- Tiemblo cuando me van a preguntar en la clase de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
4.- Me asusta no entender lo que el profesor está diciendo en la clase de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
5.- No me molestaría en absoluto asistir a más clases de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
6.- Durante la clase de inglés me doy cuenta de que pienso en cosas que no tienen nada que ver con la clase.	1	2	3	4	5
7.- Continuamente pienso que mis compañeros son mejores hablando inglés que yo.	1	2	3	4	5
8.- Normalmente me siento relajado cuando presento exámenes en la clase de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5

9.- Me pongo muy nervioso cuando tengo que hablar en clase de inglés y no me he preparado bien.	1	2	3	4	5
10.- Me preocupa las consecuencias que traería el equivocarme al hablar en la clase de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
11.- No comprendo por qué razón algunas personas se preocupan tanto cuando deben hablar en la clase de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
12.- En la clase de inglés me pongo tan nervioso que se me olvidan algunas cosas que sé.	1	2	3	4	5
13.- Me avergüenza participar voluntariamente en la clase de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
14.- No me pondría nervioso si conversara con hablantes nativos del inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
15.- Me inquieto cuando no comprendo lo que el profesor está corrigiendo	1	2	3	4	5
16.- Siento temor aun cuando estoy preparado para una presentación oral en inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
17.- A menudo no me apetece hablar en la clase de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
18.- Me siento seguro de mí mismo cuando hablo en la clase de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
19.- Me produce temor que el profesor de inglés esté pendiente de corregir cada error que cometo.	1	2	3	4	5
20.- Se me acelera el corazón cuando se me pide que intervenga en la clase de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
21.- Cuando más estudio para un examen oral de inglés, más confundido me siento.	1	2	3	4	5
22.- No siento presión ni preocupaciones cuando me preparo bien para la clase de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
23.- Siempre tengo la sensación de que mis compañeros hablan mejor el inglés que yo.	1	2	3	4	5
24.- Me preocupa mucho hablar en inglés frente a otros	1	2	3	4	5

estudiantes.					
25.- Las clases de inglés transcurren con tal rapidez que me preocupa quedarme atrasado.	1	2	3	4	5
26.- Me siento más tenso y nervioso en las clases de inglés que en otras clases.	1	2	3	4	5
27.- Me pongo nervioso y me confundo cuando hablo en la clase de inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
28.- Mientras voy en camino a la clase de inglés me siento muy seguro y relajado.	1	2	3	4	5
29.- Me pongo nervioso cuando no entiendo cada una de las palabras que dice el profesor.	1	2	3	4	5
30.- Me abruma la cantidad de reglas que hay que aprender para poder hablar en inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
31.- Temo que mis compañeros de clases se rían de mí cuando hablo en inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
32.- Probablemente me sentiría cómodo entre hablantes nativos del inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
33.- Me pongo nervioso cuando el profesor de inglés me hace preguntas que no he preparado por anticipado.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix G: Quantitative analysis of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

Number of participants: 18					
Question	Option	Cycle 1		Cycle 3	
		AS	%	AS	%
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	1	0	0%	0	0%
	2	0	0%	2	11%
	3	2	11%	3	17%
	4	12	67%	9	50%
	5	4	22%	4	22%
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	1	2	11%	1	6%
	2	10	56%	9	50%
	3	4	22%	4	22%
	4	2	11%	3	17%
	5	0	0%	1	6%
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	1	5	28%	5	28%
	2	6	33%	5	28%
	3	3	17%	3	17%
	4	3	17%	4	22%
	5	1	6%	1	6%
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know	1	4	22%	4	22%
	2	8	44%	6	33%
	3	3	17%	4	22%
	4	2	11%	2	11%
	5	1	6%	2	11%
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	1	4	22%	3	17%
	2	8	44%	6	33%
	3	3	17%	3	17%
	4	3	17%	4	22%
	5	0	0%	2	11%
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it	1	3	17%	3	17%
	2	6	33%	5	28%
	3	5	28%	3	17%
	4	2	11%	4	22%
	5	2	11%	3	17%
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	1	4	22%	3	17%
	2	10	56%	7	39%
	3	1	6%	2	11%

Number of participants: 18					
Question	Option	Cycle 1		Cycle 3	
		AS	%	AS	%
	4	2	11%	4	22%
	5	1	6%	2	11%
26. I feel more tense and nervous n my language class than in my other classes.	1	4	22%	4	22%
	2	8	44%	7	39%
	3	3	17%	2	11%
	4	2	11%	3	17%
	5	1	6%	2	11%
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	1	4	22%	2	11%
	2	10	56%	8	44%
	3	3	17%	3	17%
	4	1	6%	3	17%
	5	0	0%	2	11%
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	1	5	28%	3	17%
	2	7	39%	6	33%
	3	0	0%	0	0%
	4	4	22%	5	28%
	5	2	11%	4	22%

Conventions

NP: Number of participants

NS: Number of students per question

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. I don't know
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

Appendix H: Lesson Plan and Didactic unit

Área: humanidades Subject: English	Week: 1	STUDENT I	Grade: Tenth and Eleventh	FourthTwo- monthperiod
Aims: By the end of the lesson the students will be able to report orally their learning experiences				
<i>TOPIC</i>	<i>ACTIVITY</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>GRADE</i>	<i>COMMENTS</i>
Introduction Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher will show students a short presentation including the research question and the objectives, in order to let them know the methodology and timeline (Appendix 1) The teacher will provide students with a survey and two checklists, in order to determine students' language anxiety level. The teacher will show students the website they are going to work with, www. Blaving.comBy providing them with some samples, using the projector and the laptop.Students will discuss the possible positive impact of using this tool in class. Then, the teacher will ask students to create an account in the website, in order they can participate. The teacher will show a video about Learning experiences, taken from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgS-QEF3Dng The teacher will ask the students a set of questions to be answered orally. Example: Do you like your school? What do you like the most? Do you like learning English? What did you learn the last week? Additionally the teacher will show students a set of flashcards, they will match the picture to the description of the action in past 			As this is the first session of the pedagogical implementation, we want our students to know about the development of the application of materials.
Presentation				
Warming up				
		August 26	1001 and 1101	-
Presentation				-
Practice				
Assessment	Individually, the students will create a draft			

	about their learning experiences using pictures. The teacher will give students a set of papers with opposite words, so that they can find the pairs, they are going to give feedback about the draft they did.			
Institutions	Ofelia Uribe High School/ Luis Angel Arango High School Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje SENA, regional Metal			
Grade or proficiency level	7 th grade, 10 th grade and elementary level			
Students' current level	The students' current level is A1 according to the Common European Framework. The students are able to communicate very basic written and oral personal information about their routine, their family and their environment. Students are able to establish a basic conversation and to make short presentations about everyday topics, as well as making short descriptions about everyday scenarios.			
Course description	This course will be focused on the students' affective factors, especially the level of negative anxiety, which may be causing some difficulties in the oral performance and the development of the speaking skill. The specific content will be the past activities (topics: learning experiences, last vacation and childhood anecdotes). The tool chosen to use in order to help students to decrease negative anxiety is the audio-blog.			
Course goal	Bearing in mind the background explained above, we state the following goals: *What is the possible impact of implementing audio-blogs in order to lower students' negative anxiety in spoken performance? *To what extent can the use of audio-blogs foster speaking skills?			
Objectives	By the end of the lessons the students will be able to express their learning experiences in a voice recording. By the end of the lessons the students will be able to use audio blogs as tools to improve their spoken performance. By the end of the lessons the students will be able to use language for talking about their last vacation and childhood experiences in a short dialogue.			

Assessment	<p>Assessment will be taken as a qualitative process and will be focused on checklists that motivate three important aspects:</p> <p>Know: After completion of the session students will be able to recognize the main steps to make audio-blogs.</p> <p>Know-how: At the end of the lesson students will be able to make an audio-blog in order to share the final products of their compositions related to past activities.</p> <p>Know how to be: Through the construction of audio-blogs, students will participate actively during the class, promoting an environment of respect, confidence and coexistence. They will also have the opportunity to reflect on his/her student log.</p>
Policies	<p>Taking into account that learners will use different website sources to develop the audio-blogs, it is necessary that students know that there are some policies regarding the rights of the owner to publish, copy, adapt, broadcast and perform material contained in literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works, and in computer software, sound recordings, films, and broadcasts (James Cook University, Australia). Thus, students will reference all the authors they use in their tasks, if not students might receive penalizations according to the national copyright policies.</p> <p>Another important aspect that students need to consider during the construction of the audio-blogs is the netiquette rules; netiquette refers to etiquette on the Internet, the good behavior adapted for electronic communications via e-mail, instant messaging, chat rooms and discussion forums (Sullivan, 2002). Some of these rules include the avoidance of capital letters, the respect among classmates, even when disagreeing with ideas or viewpoints, respect the late work policy and use forum and institutional mail to communicate with the classmates and the tutor.</p>